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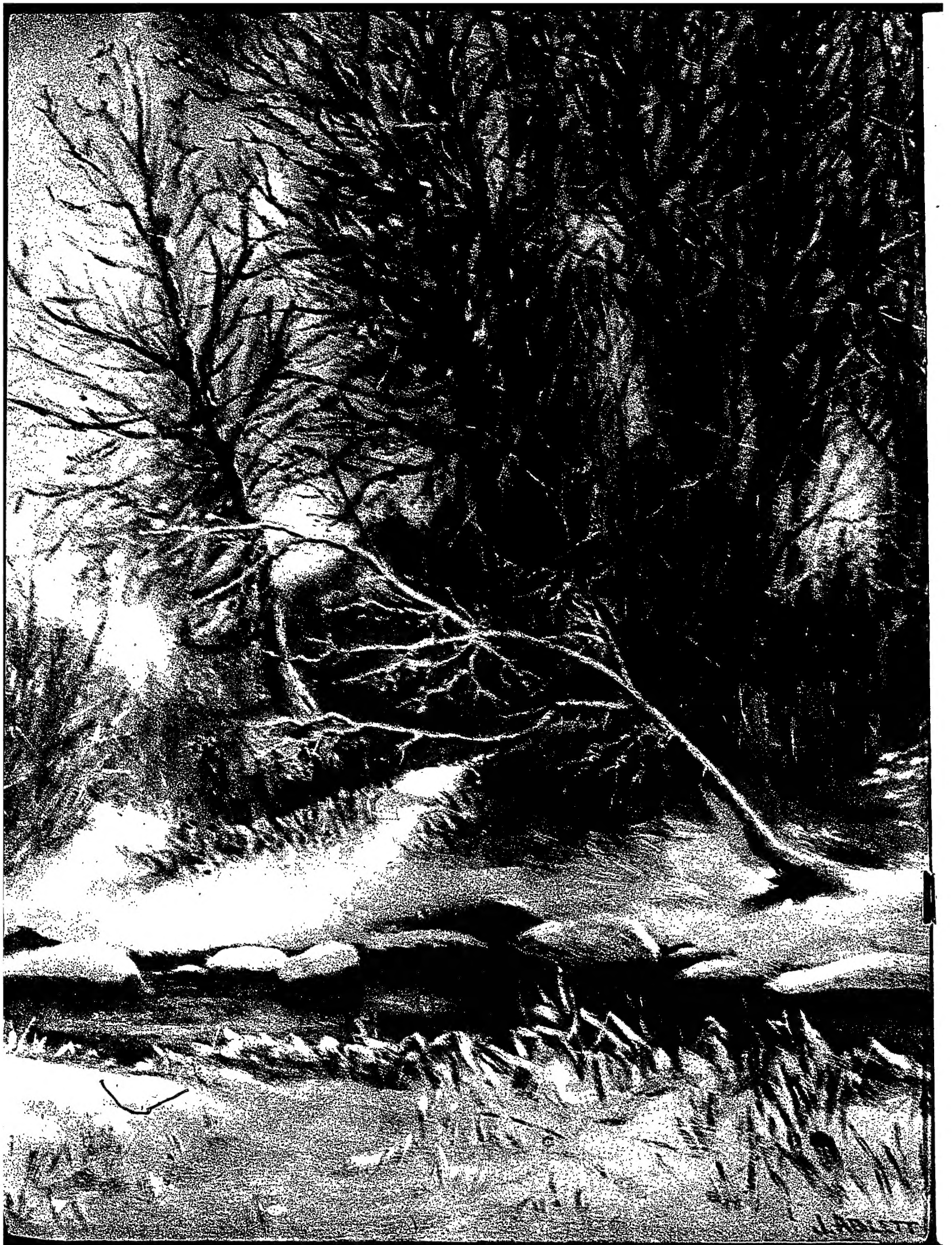
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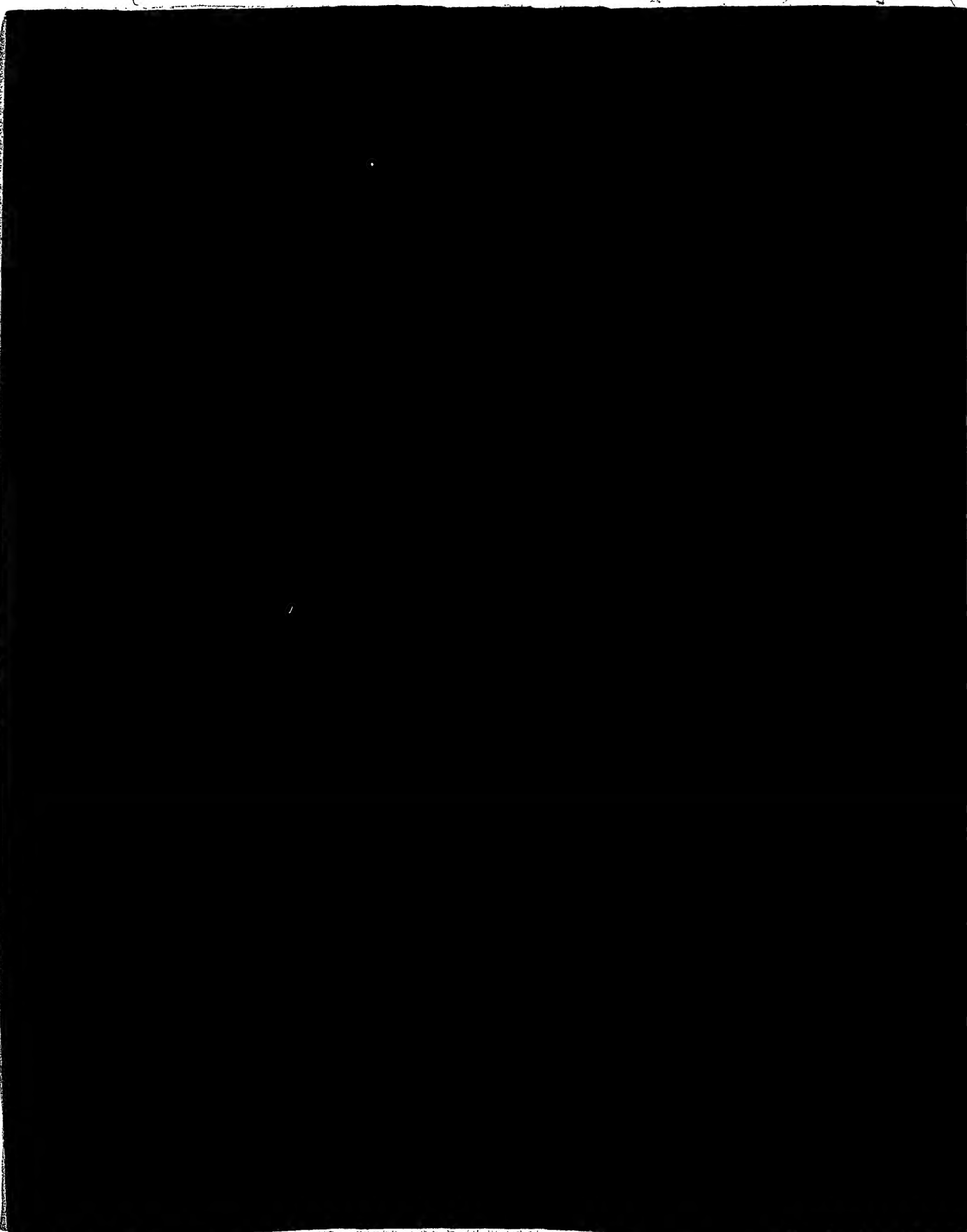
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ROMANTIC NORTHLAND

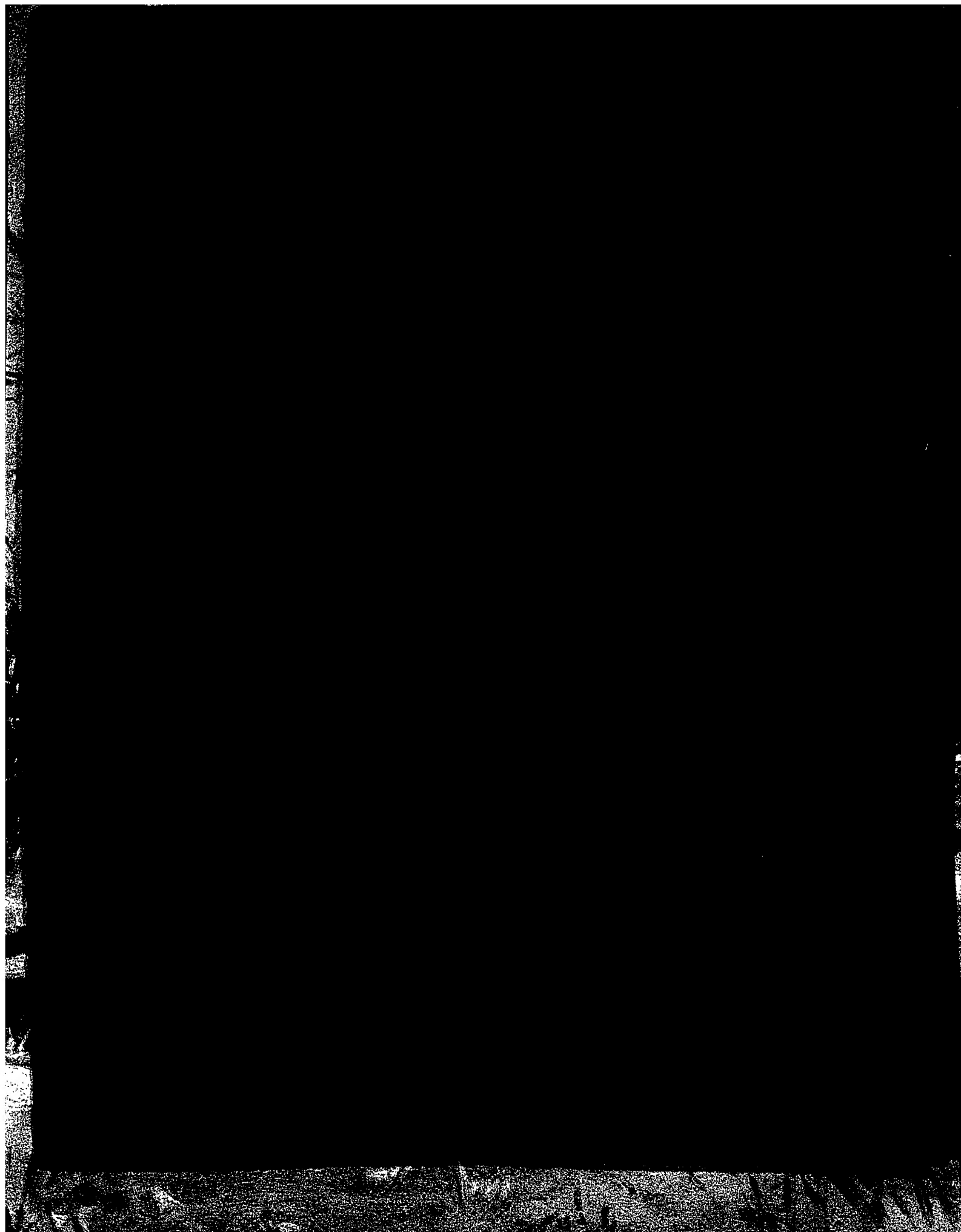
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Invitation . . .

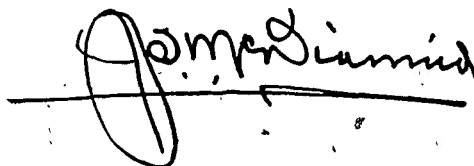
I should like to introduce to you a land of romance, adventure and history — a land north of the 53rd parallel, where industry and commerce flourish, where hunting and fishing are of the best and gay festivals are held.

Northern mines deliver their deep-buried treasures the year round, while during the winter, trappers go their rounds and tractor trains thread their tenuous ways through the snows.

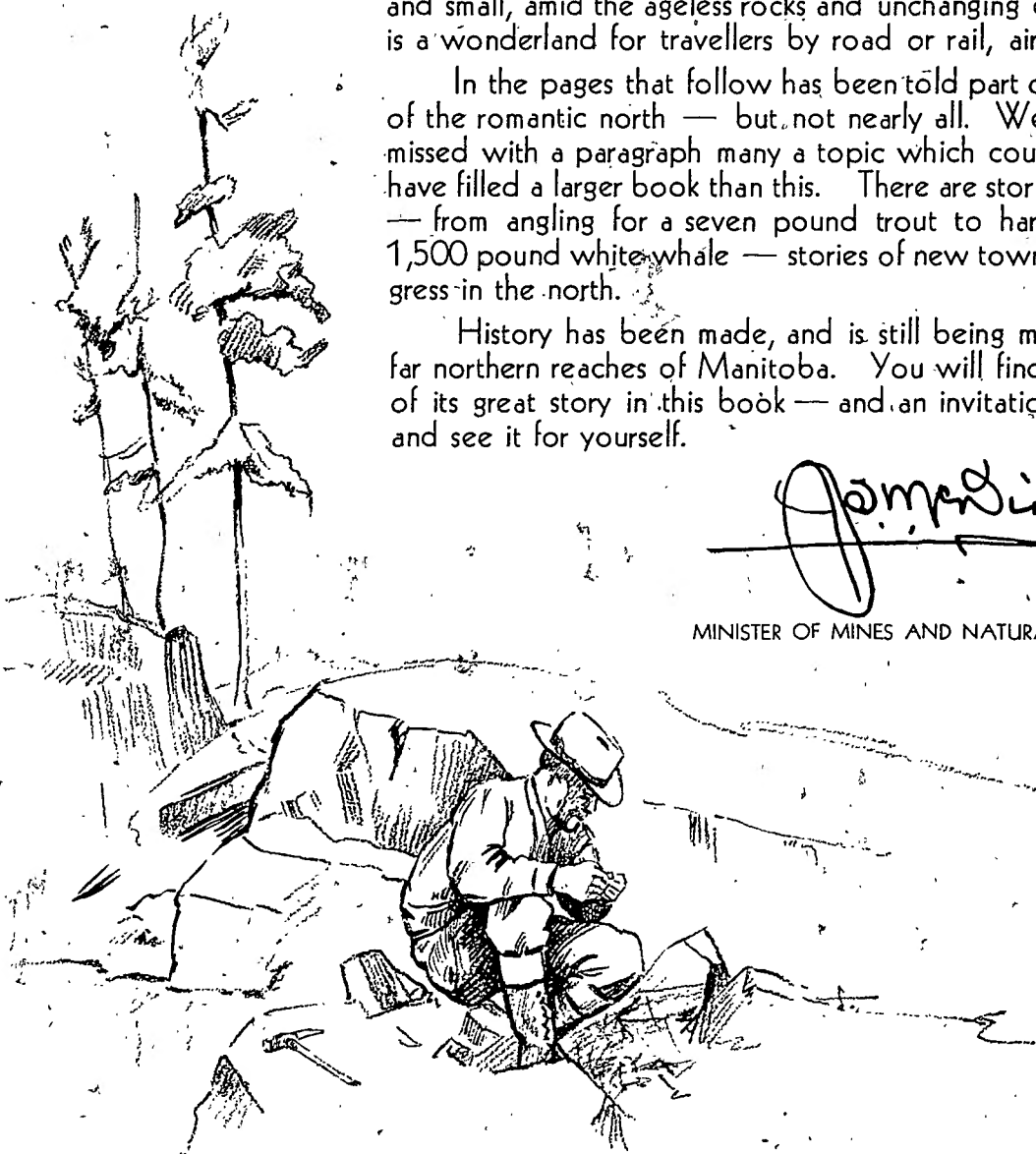
And in the summer of incredibly long days the north-land blossoms, and up among the thousands of lakes large and small, amid the ageless rocks and unchanging evergreens, is a wonderland for travellers by road or rail, air or water.

In the pages that follow has been told part of the story of the romantic north — but not nearly all. We have dismissed with a paragraph many a topic which could by itself have filled a larger book than this. There are stories of sport — from angling for a seven pound trout to harpooning a 1,500 pound white whale — stories of new towns and progress in the north.

History has been made, and is still being made, in the far northern reaches of Manitoba. You will find a glimpse of its great story in this book — and an invitation to come and see it for yourself.



MINISTER OF MINES AND NATURAL RESOURCES



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The Trout are Here . . .

FOR the fisherman whose interest in angling goes beyond the need for catching something to eat, Manitoba offers thrilling settings for streams abounding in speckled trout and arctic grayling.

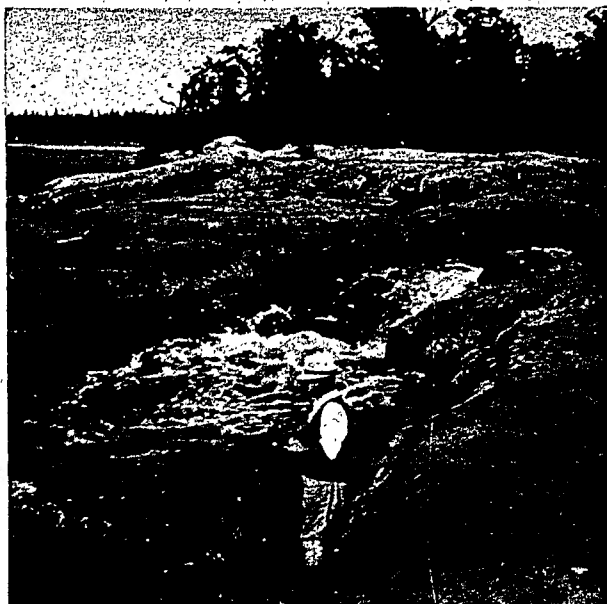
In the eastern part of the Nelson River basin, 300 to 350 miles north-east of The Pas, may be found one of the great trout fishing regions of North America. Beginning, just below the Kettle Rapids on the Nelson River, it extends to the north-east along the river to Port Nelson, south-westward up the Hays and Deer Rivers to the God's Lake mining area, north through the Fox Lake country to the headwaters of the Kettle River and eastward again along the Hudson Bay Railway to the village of Gillam, Manitoba, to complete the circle at the junction of the Kettle and Nelson Rivers below Kettle Rapids.

Regular trains from Winnipeg now make this area quite accessible—or the motorist may drive over all-weather roads as far as The Pas, and from there take one of the weekly trains to the north. Outfitting point for anglers is Gillam, where reasonable hotel accommodation, outfitters and stores can take care of the needs of fishermen. From these establishments may be had tents, canoes, camp equipment and the services of guides.

Not as far north as Gillam is the Cranberry Portage fishing area, where trout, pickerel and other game fish are to be found. Situated in the midst of a web of lakes and connecting streams, Cranberry Portage lies about 55 miles north of The Pas. It is easily reached by rail, air or water routes.

Fishing and hunting are excellent throughout the district, and reliable guides, boats, canoes and camping equipment may be obtained at the town. Several camps, offering good accommodation and services, are located near Cranberry Portage. Cottages for visitors line the nearby lake shore—or campers may pitch tents on fine camp sites. Beaches, boating trips and the wild, rugged scenery make Cranberry Portage a pleasant spot for non-fishing members of holiday parties.

The town of Cranberry Portage itself is the centre of a mining, prospecting, fishing and trapping area. Among its scenic highlights are Lake Athapapuskow—with its more than 1,800 miles of shore line, 1,100 islands and crystal clear water 300 feet deep in places—and the Limestone Rocks, near the narrows of the first of three Cranberry Lakes.

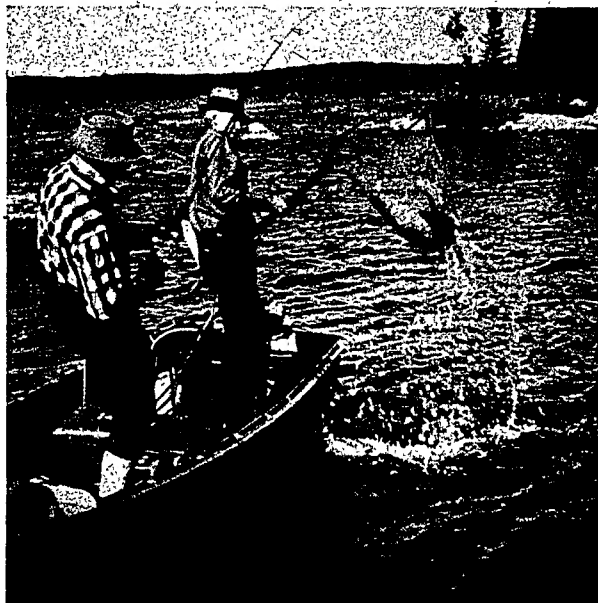


R. F. T. GREER

Along the water routes to Elbow Lake and Flin Flon may be seen bear, caribou, jumping deer, moose, geese, ducks, grouse, prairie chicken and partridge, in season.

From Gillam, farther north, to many good trout waters is only a walking matter, and canoe routes fan out over fast or lazy waters, to suit all tastes. One trip begins below Kettle Rapids, through the massive beauty of the Nelson River, flashing over swift stretches and gliding among island-studded reaches.

In sheltered eddies and in the mouths of numerous creeks trout eagerly await the bait — or so returning anglers say. Down the Nelson River are the Long Spruce Rapids, which drop 85 feet in four and a half miles, and of which all but one 12-foot waterfall may be navigated



in safety by skilled canoe men, in a thrilling dash. For 25 miles this route winds past proven trout streams and waters still to be tried. At the end of the trip canoes and equipment may be loaded aboard a train at Mile 352 and shipped back to Gillam.

Mile 352 itself is an ideal fishing location for a party with camping outfit and outboard motor. Cliffs 200 feet high are ramparts of the Nelson River, and from their tops can be seen a striking view of two rapids. A party camped at Mile 352 can fish up or downstream on the Nelson, or walk across country to the Limestone River, not far away.

For 40 miles up the Limestone from Mile 350, where the Hudson Bay Railway crosses, trout fishing is superb. Spacious camping grounds lie between the railway and the river, and trout fishing begins a couple of hundred yards from where the tents are pitched. Below the railway the river is too shallow for fishing, but upstream lies a long succession of short, fast rapids loaded with fish. The shores are clear of trees and brush, and lend themselves



to fly and bait casting. At almost any place along the 40 miles are excellent camp sites.

Many short stretches of the Limestone are fast enough to require "tracking"—hauling the canoe up on a line—but these stretches are quite safe to run on the journey down, with no falls in the 40 miles.

The Weir River, crossed by the Hudson Bay Railway at Mile 374, is highly recommended. At all the many swift water points on the river trout can be taken, both above and below the railway crossing. The best fishing begins about 15 miles downstream. Banks of the Weir are nicely wooded for camping, and in the absence of any falls or dangerous rapids the river is safe for any canoe party. There are few places where even a canoe would have to be tracked going upstream.

A party on the Weir River trip would have a chance to see otter and beaver in their natural surroundings, and

anglers have found otter slides to be sure signs of good fishing.

For a longer trip, a party might start at the mouth of the Limestone River at Mile 352, travel down the Nelson River to the mouth of the Weir and up the Weir to Mile 374—a distance of about 150 miles, and good for two weeks without hurry or hard work. A safe but exciting trip down the mighty Nelson, plenty of trout fishing and fine scenery are included in the jaunt. All rapids on this stretch of the Nelson can be run, except for those at the extreme head of navigation.

Guides are available at Mile 352 for the Nelson trip, and are not needed along the Weir. A competent guide

a small copper-lined spinner or Colorado spinner; sometimes baited with meat, fish, grasshoppers or anything else that might prove attractive. Fly fishing is expected to be more popular in the future when its possibilities are better known.

It would be too bad to leave the north country without having a try at angling for arctic grayling, a little known fish whose haunts are rivers and streams flowing into Hudson Bay. Fly fishermen who would tempt these colorful fish should travel to between Miles 412 and 498 on the Hudson Bay Railway and drop their lures on the Owl, Deer or Churchill Rivers, or at Cook's Creek at Mile 498.



For trout, try the Red Deer River.

is necessary on the rougher stretches of the Nelson, to insure safety.

The whole northern area is almost unlimited in its angling possibilities, and once on the ground the sportsman will find new streams easily reached, as time and finances permit. Speckled trout taken in these areas are considerably larger than is usual in eastern streams, most catches running to an average weight of more than four pounds, with single fish commonly touching seven. Frequently used tackle in the north is a trowel similar to

Ideal time for grayling is late August and through September, when a hooked grayling is one of the toughest fish to be found, spectacular in its great leaps from the water and its strength and endurance.

Once started, a discussion of northern fishing could go on for hours, but we don't intend to take it any further than this; Manitoba has hundreds of accessible lakes and streams with game, fighting fish in them. They are there for you, if you want to try for them—and you are entirely welcome. □

The Key to Up and Down

Everything up and down in the north goes through The Pas, for it is the great key—the lobby of the northland—for all comers. The Pas is north of parallel 53, far from the blasé big cities. The inhabitants are not blasé, but nothing surprises them, for they are too busy waiting for the next thing to happen—and anything is likely to happen in this town of 3,000 permanent inhabitants; anything, from salesmen selling airplanes as new as tomorrow, to dinosaur bones older than the rocks in which they lie.

Near The Pas they have found tropical snakes wound around tropical trees—and turned to stone.

They have found the boundary of Lake Agassiz, the great inland sea which once covered the whole of the midwest. Here you can have one foot on limestone which lay beneath the salt water, and your other foot on pre-cambrian granite which was the shoreline millions of years ago. The great rock of Canada—the pre-cambrian shield—swings by here.

Even one of the hotels at The Pas is called Cambrian, and in the lobby of that hotel you'll meet characters who are fortune hunting, men just back from muskrat farms, and Americans who have been hunting white whales at

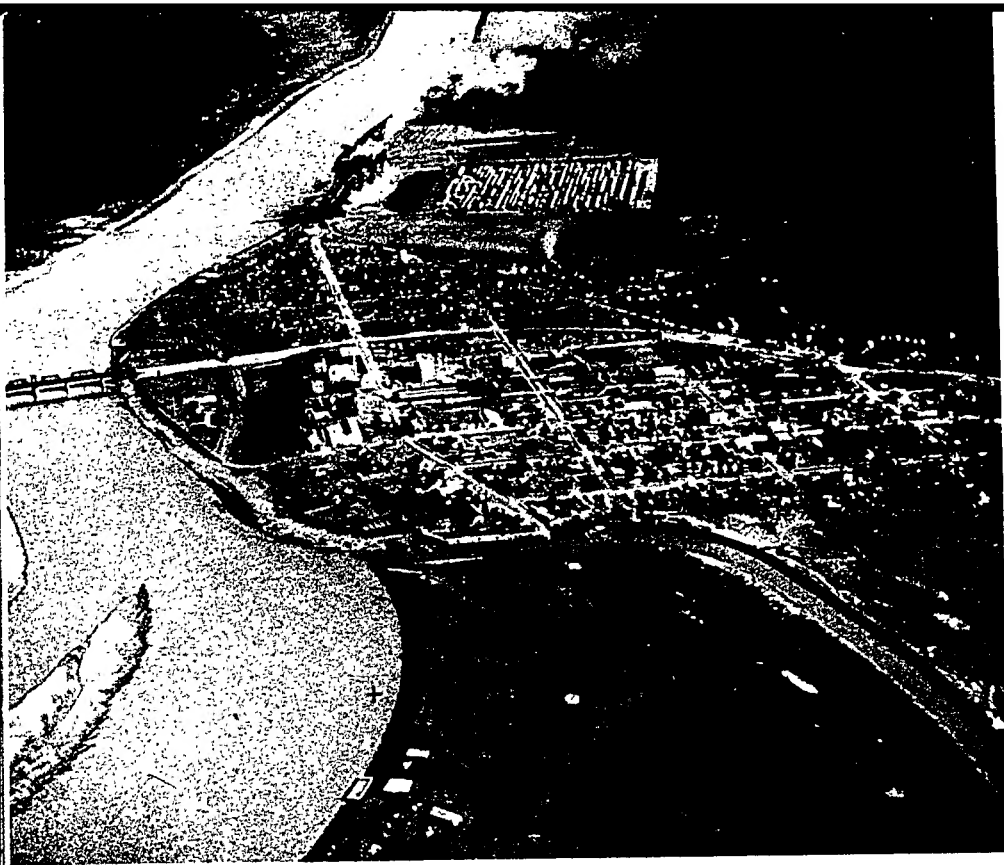
Churchill or taking pictures of the caribou farther north.

The subject of caribou introduces the story of a great hunt in the northland—a hunt not for caribou, but for a little black notebook. Bob Taylor of the *Northern Mail* tells the story.

Most concerned are the Chippawayan Indians, the only tribe that live almost exclusively on caribou meat up in the barren stretches of the north. Charlie Duck was their great patriarch and leader. He was over 60, and that made him the more revered. He had more education than most Indians in the wild country, and he wrote down the tribe's history. He recorded for the hunters the cycle of the fox and beaver. More important, he kept a record of how the mighty caribou herds moved in their mysterious sweeps across Canada's northland.

Old meets new, as a dog team lines up close by the latest thing in snowmobiles.





Seen from the air, The Pas is a neat, compact town.

The Chippawayans wait for them, and if they miss the migration, they face winter-long hunger. Charlie Duck held the learning of the tribe in his notebook, but Charlie Duck took ill, and the white doctor said it was tuberculosis. Down from the barrens the Chippawayan was sent. A Winnipeg hospital did all it could, but the Indian wise man could not fight the white plague. They moved him to The Pas, closer to his beloved north, and he died and was buried there in the Indian cemetery outside the town.

The Chippawayans up at Duck Lake mourned their leader, but they still had the history and the secrets of the caribou. They went through the old man's effects, confident—then bewildered. The little black book was missing.

The government, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and missionaries are scouring the northland for that little notebook, and the very lives of a whole Indian tribe may depend on the finding of it.

The marshes that stretch for miles outside The Pas are, in their own strange way, a tribute to foresight, common sense and imagination. A few years ago the Summerberry marshes were hard and dry, baked by the sun and almost stripped of life. Then the engineer rolled up his sleeves and went to work. He studied the ways of the great Saskatchewan River. He dammed up the

creeks and sloughs, dug canals and trenches, blasted and shifted the earth.

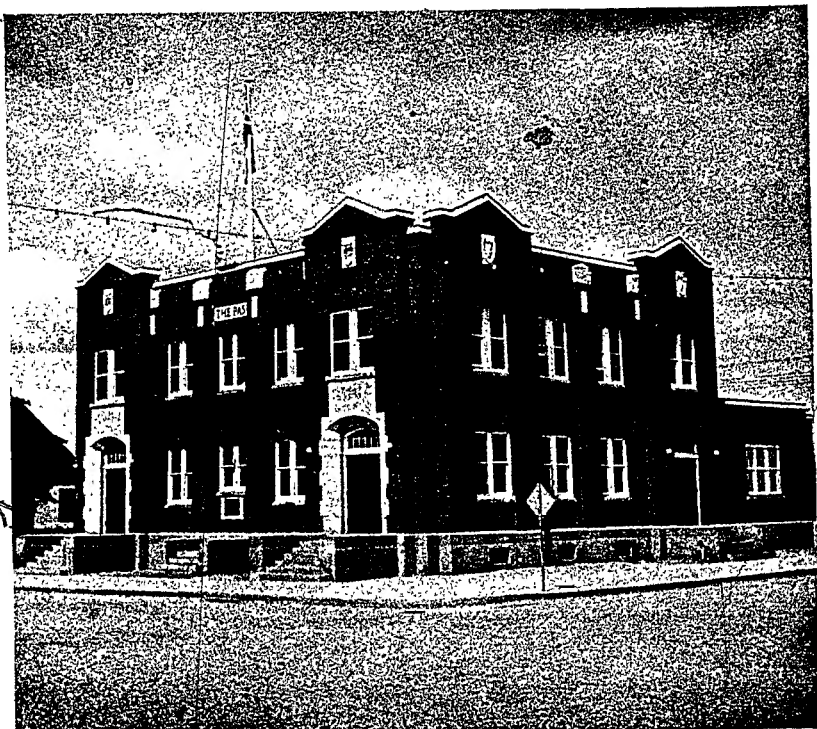
When the waters of the long Saskatchewan came rolling down on Lake Winnipeg, they were held and controlled. Soon, on the drought-stricken

marshes, plant life began to flourish, and within a few seasons thousands of little mounds rose out of the marshes. They were muskrat houses, and out of what had been wastes there came in a few years the world's greatest muskrat farm. They grow fur coats at The Pas—nearly every woman there has one—and when the rat season is on and the prices are right, even the barber is likely to take to the marshes. In three years the muskrat population of Summerberry increased from 100 to more than 30,000. Today there are hundreds of thousands of the animals there, and rat trapping is big business in the north.

The road to the fabulous Churchill starts at The Pas. Men now digging for new riches 200 miles north all swept through here. So did Henry Kelsey way back in 1691. Here, where the Saskatchewan, Carrot and Pasquia Rivers meet, the father of the western plains, La Verendrye, established a fort. Sir John Franklin, searching for the North-west Passage, stopped at The Pas. So did the U.S. Army Air Corps on their Arctic run to Europe and back again.

Whether the traffic is up, or down, this is the gateway—the lobby of the northland. Tourists, fishermen, trappers, businessmen, traders, military men, all the cargo pouring into the north, pause at The Pas. For The Pas is the key to up and down. □

This modern post office is one of the town's assets.



Level Land and Towering Skies
... near The Pas





The northland's finest was the muskrat coat presented to Fur Queen Ruth Anderson by a Winnipeg fur company.



With his tablemates awaiting the decision, a trapper samples the new delicacy of the north, beaver-tail soup.

Trappers' Festival

The Pas, Manitoba, January, 1948

TRAPPERS, traders, miners, lumbermen and Indian chiefs flocked to the northern gateway town of The Pas, Manitoba, late in January, 1948, for the northland's first Trappers' Festival. For three days they sang, danced, admired fine furs and Fur Queen candidates, compared their skills in dog mushing and wood cutting. Many sampled a new dish called beaver-tail soup, hailed as "a lot like ox-tail—but then again different."

Indian fiddlers took over the old-time music contest, and a Nelson House driver carried off honors in the main dog team event, a 20-mile freight dog race with 150 pound load. Husky trappers and guides hefted 100-pound packs to their shoulders and galloped over a measured course, others hitched toboggans to Indian ponies and careened through their races, while the more conservative souls vied for victory in the snowshoe events.

Indian chiefs from Moose Lake, The Pas, Grand Rapids, Cedar Lake and Pukatawagan were there for the show, and so were plain citizens from Churchill, Flin Flon, Swan River, Nelson House, Cross Lake, Cranberry Portage, Oxford House, Thicket Portage, Summerberry and points north. Better than a thousand came, by plane and on foot, by train and dog team.

To rule the festivities, the visitors and townspeople chose their Fur Queen, 20-year-old Ruth Anderson, daughter of a Churchill fur dealer, and when they were through celebrating they sent her on a goodwill trip to Minneapolis and Chicago, wearing the finest Northern mink muskrat coat the northland could provide.

One businesslike note in the festival was the registered trapline officers' conference, which also occupied the three days, and was, in fact, the foundation of the celebrations.



Hardy Scot Alex Simpson braved freezing weather in kilts and blew a mean bagpipe for the soup tasting ceremony.



Of the many dog teams in The Pas for the festival, some took the girls for rides, and others competed in races.



Mrs. Bob Taylor, wife of the "Northern Mail's" editor, interviews a notable northerner, Caribou Bill Anger.



Much in evidence throughout the three days of festivities were husky dogs and pretty, smiling, parka-clad girls.



Fur Queen Candidates Bernice Walstrom, Sylvia Pangrass, Terry Gamache sit at the feet of Winner Ruth Anderson.

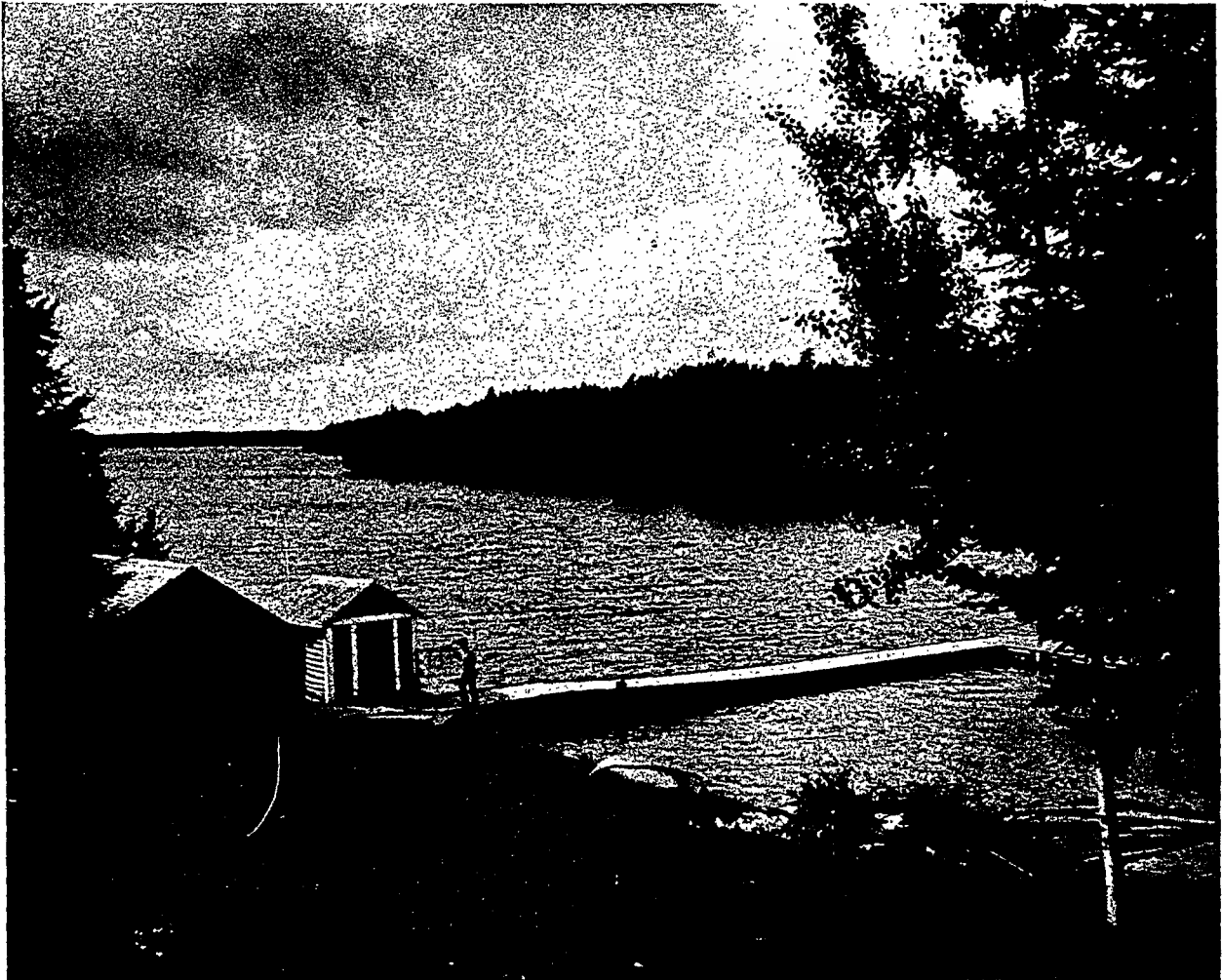


While beaver tails simmer, Beaver Expert Dick Fourre and Chef Eddie Hong palaver with CFAR's Gerry Quinney.



*Ageless Rocks and
Unchanging Evergreens
... Cormorant Lake*

*Typical of the North . . .
Game and Forestry Post
at Landing Lake*





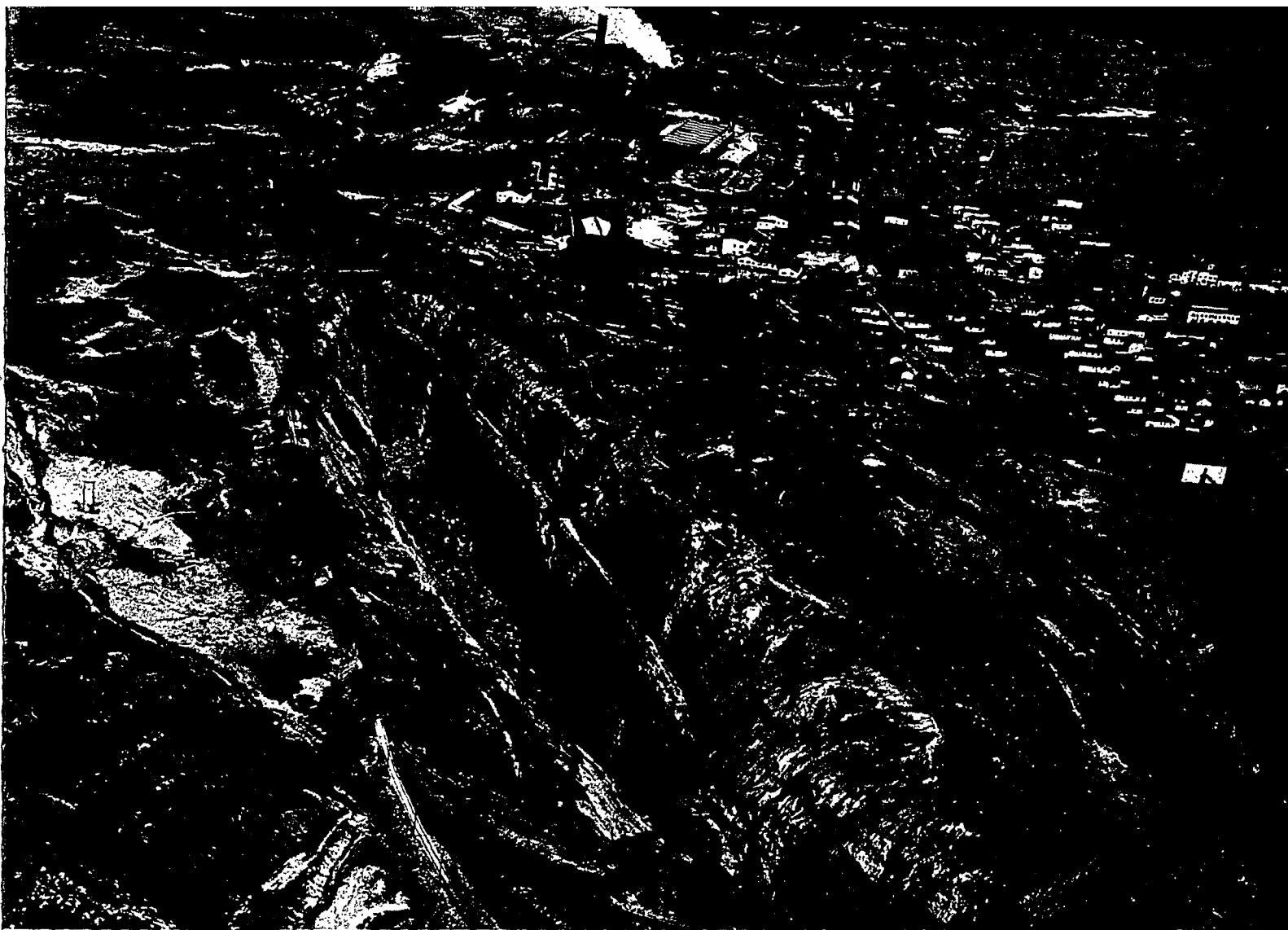
Fabulous

Flin

Flon



Black against a brilliant sky, a smelter belches smoke in the year-round business of refining metals.



"Old Flin Flon's mine" has grown into this great gash in the solid rock.

THEY were looking for riches, these men. For weeks they had been pounding on the rocks a hundred miles beyond the steel in northern Manitoba. Through muskeg and over rocks these six prospectors roamed some 25 years ago. One day they came upon something which gave to the world a new name.

These prospectors sat down for lunch one day. Around them were signs indicating other prospectors had been over this country before them, and as they sat there talking about old times and old characters, one of them noticed a piece of paper half hidden beneath a log. It was one of the old dime novel thrillers with the cover torn off. It was an English novel titled "The Sunless City," and the hero was a character named Joseph Flintabbaty Flonatin.

Now this fabulous Joseph Flintabbaty Flonatin, so the story went, built a submarine and descended in it through a bottomless lake into the bowels of the earth. After travelling straight down for two weeks, he found himself in a strange land dripping with gold, where everything was done backwards. The streets were paved with gold, and tin was used for coinage, and rough, tough women

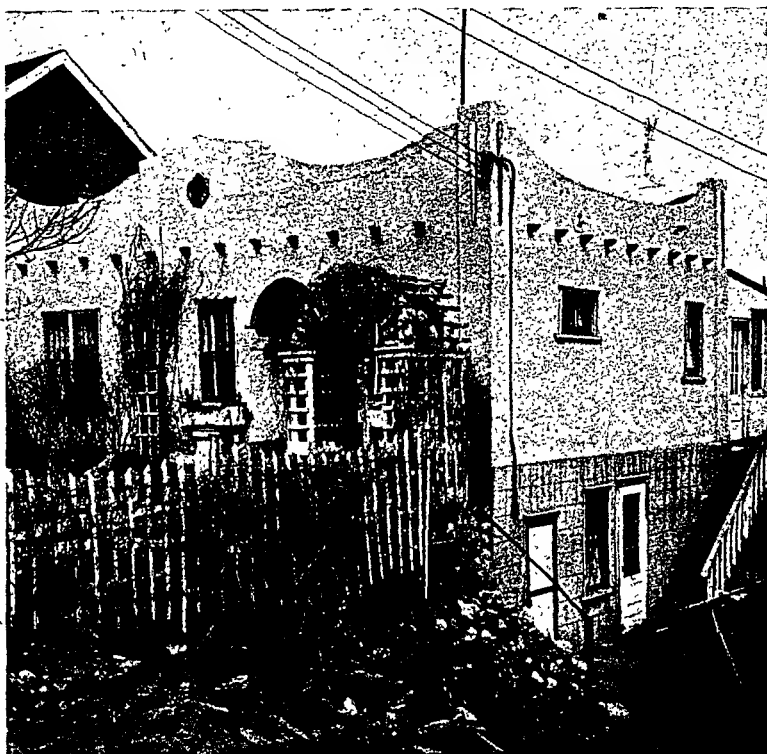
ruled over delicate and pampered men. It was fear of the amazonian women that led Flonatin to escape by climbing the crater of an extinct volcano.

The prospectors got a kick out of such a fantastic story, but one thing bothered them. They didn't know how it ended, for the back pages of the book were missing. They went on with their work, and now and then they joked about the book and its hero.

Then one day Thomas Creighton came upon a conical hole about 10 feet across. He called his companions over, and there in the wilderness history was made. "Boys," he is reported to have said, "I guess we've found old Flin Flon's mine."

They surely had, for near that hole in the bush now live 8,000 people and one of the most thriving payroll towns in Canada—Flin Flon—a town which drew its wealth from the rocks and its name from a legendary character in a dime novel.

Flin Flon has a personality of its own. Linked with the outside only by steel and airways and canoe, the people lead their own lives in this smelting town of copper, zinc, gold, silver, cadmium and salinium. They



This building, which seems to be a bungalow when seen at this angle, is really a two-storey apartment block built on the side of a steep slope on a rocky Flin Flon street.

have been thrown on their own and had to prove themselves. They sank \$30,000,000 before they took a cent out of that fabulous rockland.

More than a third of the whole population is under the age of 20. The mayor and his council were all born outside, because the town is so young. One can meet the first citizen of Flin Flon. One can also meet another, a third and a fourth. Flin Flon in the early days must have been more crowded than the Mayflower.

But pride! Community spirit is part of the personality of the town. They are proud of themselves there, and well they might be. Out of virgin rocks and forest, in two decades, they have built a complete community. It is a rugged pioneer town with pride in its refinement. Its people enjoy themselves—work hard, play hard. The lights stay on 24 hours a day.

Those lights stay on to keep from burning out. The engineers figure it this way: power is dirt cheap, and when lights are turned off the filaments freeze and crack. It's cheaper to keep them burning.

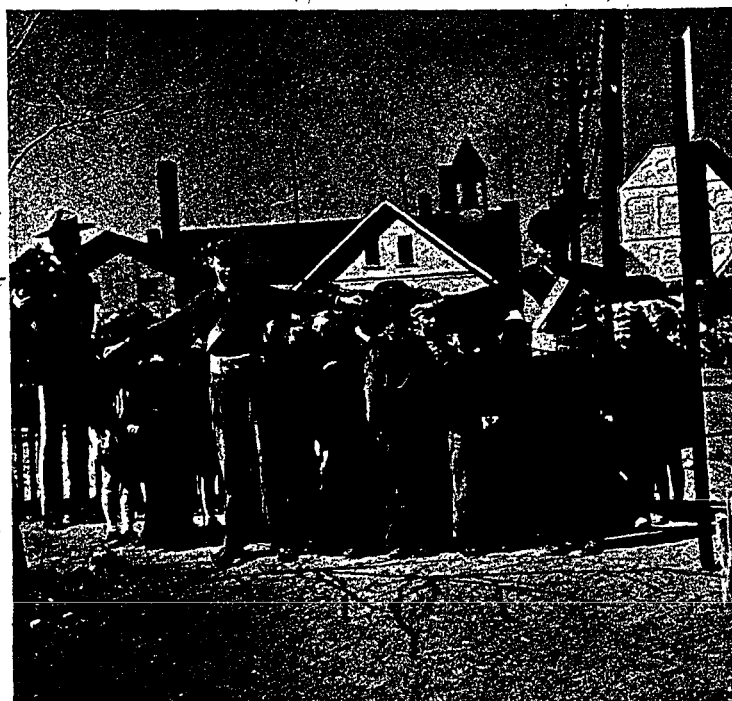
And Flin Flon is a night and day town. Many of the taxis and restaurants operate all night. No matter where you look there are always red and green lights in the sky. And those lights are the reason for the town's non-stop tempo; they mark the tall stacks of the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, which operates three shifts a day. During the war this northern Manitoba town

produced 92,000,000 pounds of copper and 8,000,000 pounds of zinc.

Another local oddity is the building of the town's sidewalks on top of the sewers. Flin Flon was so young before the war that they didn't have a chance to cut through the rock and muskeg to lay their sewers, so they laid them on top of the rocks. They built a rectangular casing around the sewer and water pipes paralleling the streets. They stand about three feet high, and someone had the idea of using them as sidewalks. Built on rough, uneven land, the town is on many different levels, and stairs are public thoroughfares.

The Post Office says Flin Flon, Manitoba, but the town actually straddles the Manitoba-Saskatchewan boundary. Almost all the buildings, and all the surface mining developments, are in Manitoba, but part of the underground workings reach into the other province. This has been known to create numerous complications.

One of the best illustrations of the appeal of this country is the story of a man and his wife who grew hungry for the teeming cities. They came south. They poked around and were shoved around in the great centres. They tasted and spent, tore and raced and watched the almighty struggle for dollars. Then they went back to the northland of Manitoba. They stepped off the train at Flin Flon, and there it was—the smell of open spaces, those strange lights in the sky, the everlasting space, peace, nature supreme. The wanderers stood there. He drew up his chest, gulped the air and said to his wife "Just breathe, Darling." □



The safety of Flin Flon's many children is guarded by school patrol boys, directed by Royal Canadian Mounted Police. More than a third of the population is under 20.

The Moccasin Telegraph



THERE is no telegraph wire—no tapping key—no small boys with messages—but the news gets through as fast as the most modern newspaper service. And it's a system as old as Canada itself. It is the moccasin telegraph.

A quiet, almost bashful man is the editor of the *Northern Mail*, in The Pas, Manitoba. In his office he has a small church pew right beside his desk. He can tell you when Dick Foure rides the Hudson Bay Railway to catch the beaver. He has the latest dope on Lynn Lake. He knows when trappers come down from the north, and what furs they have brought with them. He knows the timetable of every cat swing in the north. He has at his fingertips the news of thousands of square miles.

Where does he get this information? That church pew by his desk is the receiving end of the moccasin telegraph.

Men from all over that rugged territory come to sit in that pew and spill the stories of the great adventure that rolls north of the 53rd parallel. Editor Bob Taylor, because of his position, is perhaps the greatest receiver and sender on the moccasin telegraph. The north has always carried its news by men who wear moccasins, muckluks and hip waders.

The moccasin telegraph not only picks up the gossip and doings of the northland but, nowadays, it has great stories to tell. For up here men are doing big things, and the accent is on tomorrow. The eyes of the military world have been turned on Churchill, ocean port of the

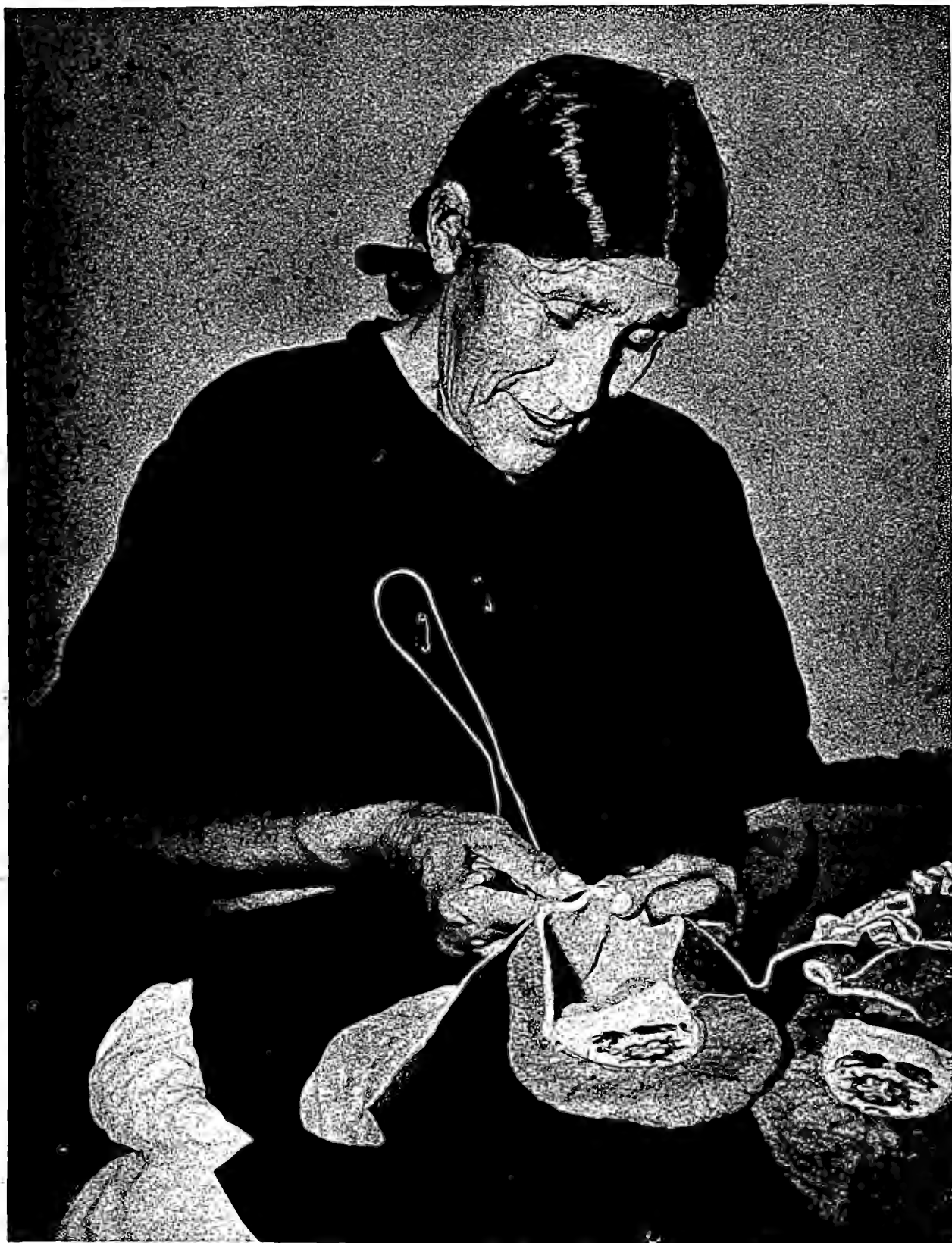
prairies. Developments are springing up at recently unknown places like Lynn and Snow Lakes. The cat swings carry prime muskrat pelts by the ton from the Summerberry marshes.

And northern Manitoba is famed not only for its history and the wealth beneath its rocks but also for the riches in its waters. It is the greatest fresh water fishing province in the Dominion. It produces as much fresh water fish as Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta combined, and a great deal of it is caught in the wintertime, through the ice.

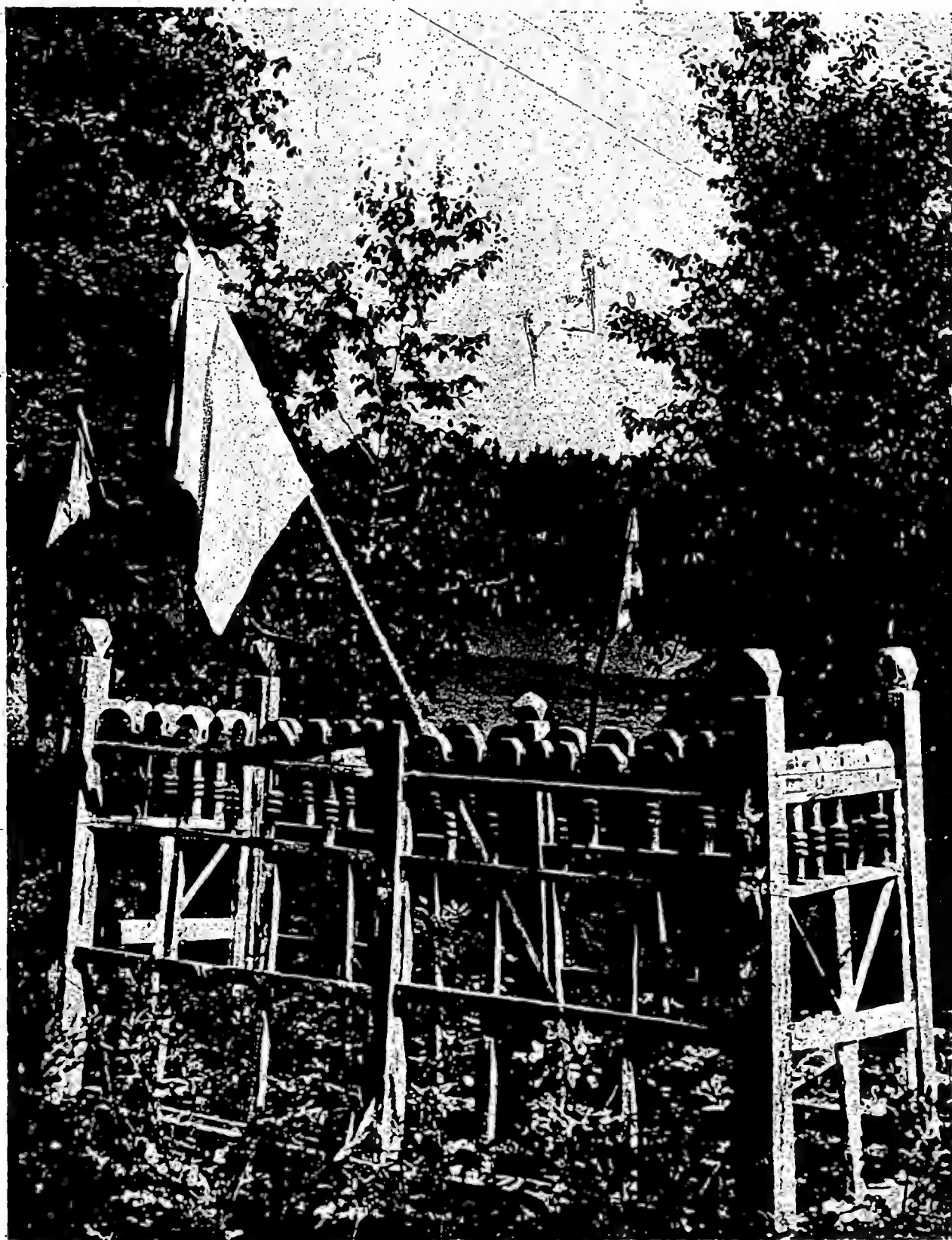
The rim of adventure—that's what they call it in Manitoba—land of great contrasts . . . big metropolitan Winnipeg . . . sweeping prairies . . . names that stand for courage—Red River, Fort Garry, Selkirk, Norway House, the Company of Gentlemen Adventures, La Verendrye.

The old and the new are here; great contrasts from prairie farming to muskrat farming, from big game hunting to duck shooting, from trapping to hard rock mining, from new cities to tent camps at Lynn Lake, from pheasant shooting to the thrilling and hair-raising sport of white whale hunting from canoes in Hudson Bay.

Where Indians and white men probe the open spaces and the woodlands, they have a word of welcome . . . Tau wow! It is a Cree word, and literally it means "there's room."



Maker of Moccasins



Grave of a Cree



Cat swings, life line of the north, thread their way across the frozen expanse of a lake.

Caravan of the Snows

UNDER the flickering, weaving northern lights, tractor trains swing out from point after point in northern Manitoba, through blizzard, through slush, through freezing temperatures. It is a hard life for the drivers and the brakemen on the tractor trains. Their work calls for endurance and strength, for courage and stamina. They would scoff at being called heroes, but their job calls for heroic qualities.

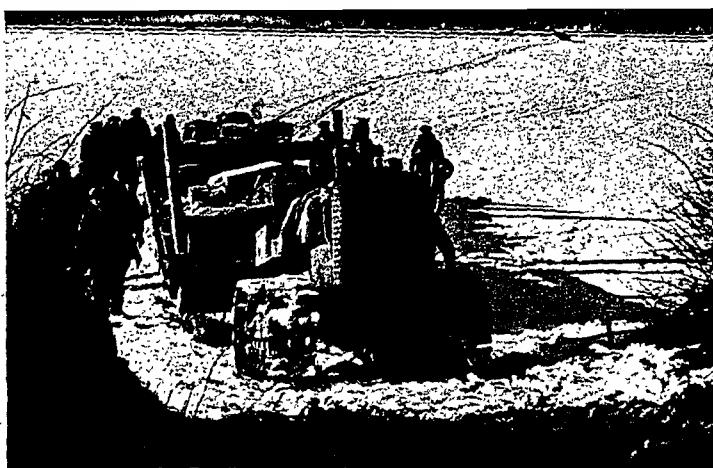
Freighting operations in the far north have overshadowed the fact that hundreds of tractor swings are in operation much nearer home. Throughout Manitoba, tractor trains rattle on their broad treads out over the frozen lakes and bumpy portage trails.

Tractor trains swing out over the vast expanses of Lake Winnipeg, bringing in their harvest of fresh-caught whitefish in heated cabooses or frozen fish on sturdy sleighs. From points on the Hudson Bay Railway and the

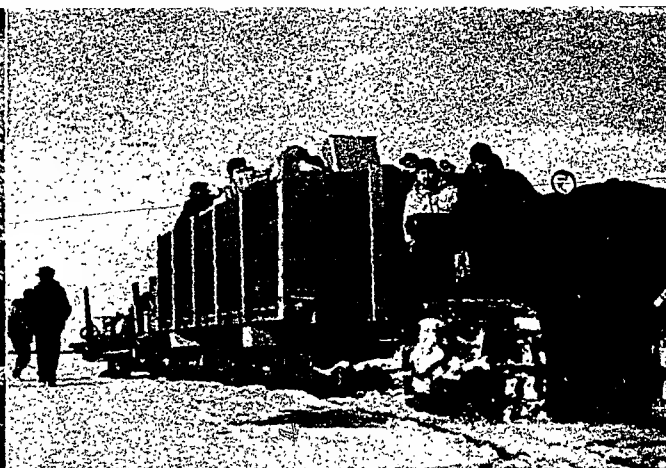
spur line to Flin Flon and Sherridon, tractor trains fetch and carry to the mines and trading posts. They are the life-line of supplies and equipment, carrying goods to the trading posts of the ancient Hudson's Bay Company and the free traders, and to tiny communities beyond reach of rail or road. They carry in massive mining equipment for the development of the new mines in Manitoba's pre-Cambrian Shield.

Often enough they come back empty, but the one-way freighting is still a profitable venture. Frequently there's a pay-load on the return trip, a pay-load of frozen fish, or mineral concentrates, or bundles of silky beautiful furs from the trading posts.

Ilford, a tiny settlement at Mile 286 on the Hudson Bay Railway, is one of the important centres for tractor freighting. From there, tractor trains swing out over the beaten road to God's Lake and points beyond, over steep hills



Dragging its loaded sleighs, a tractor heaves itself from the frozen surface of a lake onto a bumpy portage trail. Holes in the roads are filled in with logs to avoid damage to equipment.



When lake ice becomes slushy, the cat skinner sits his seat lightly, ready to leap instantly for safety, should the tractor break through.

and through valleys, bridging rivers and crossing wide frozen lakes.

The 125 miles from Ilford to God's Lake is practically a tractor highroad, used by all the swings. Sixty hours is standard time for making the jaunt one way, although it has been done in 48 hours. From God's Lake, the tractors may branch off to the mining communities such as Lingman Lake, or to the trading posts of Red Sucker and Island Lake. Or the swing may take the long trail into Ontario—to Sachigo, Trout or Bearskin Lakes. The "Bearskin Special," one of the longest swings in the country, means a trip of almost 500 miles through forest and lake country. Inevitably it is a lonesome road, only the occasional Indian trapper with his dogteam to be seen, a ghost town, or tiny community.

A blaze of lights in the freighting yard greeted me, in the darkness that precedes the dawn, when I arrived at Ilford. The frosty stars, larger and more brilliant than usual, seemed close enough to touch. The air throbbed with the steady muffled beat of the tractor engines. Up there in the north during freighting operations the engines of the great cats are never shut off. They pound or hum, idling while the freight is being loaded onto the string of sleighs. From the beginning of freighting operations in mid-December until spring break-up, the tractors throb out their powerful heart beats. The bright lights of the machines played over the piles of goods stacked in the freighting yard.

Bustle Of Loading

The next day, I watched the sleighs being loaded. The loads were geared to the strength of each machine, lighter loads for the D4's, heavier loads for the greater hauling capacity of the larger D6's. Scurrying around the yard, men piled on bags of flour, arranged so that they would not slide or pitch off on the rough journey ahead of them.

Barrels of oil—fuel for the tractors as well as for the various points of call—were rolled and hoisted by manpower onto the flat sleighs. Drums of kerosene and gasoline stood piled in readiness for the push-off. Dressed lumber was piled high on one of the rack-sleighs, destined for new trading posts in the interior of Manitoba.

Spring break-up is a bad time for the cat swings. Here men leap from a bogged sleigh, as melting snow makes the trail a trap. Sleighs must be pulled free one at a time.

Package goods, comprising syrup and snuff, chocolate bars and woollen socks, loud plaid windbreakers and drums of powdered milk, completed a load of 30 sleighs. Three cabooses were strung in line—cook caboose and sleep caboose, and another which was a combination of both. The latter was extremely useful for smaller crews of men sent on flying trips to pick up fish or deliver small loads of freight, while the main swing was busy unloading elsewhere.

I went up to Ilford for an interview, all set to return by the next train. But it was five weeks before I came south again. I jumped at the chance to accompany the swing on a trip to Red Sucker Lake, 165 miles distant, a trip that would ordinarily take 10 days. As it happened, our plans were changed midway, and it was a full 30 days before we saw Ilford again.

Most tractor swings are exclusively masculine affairs, with distinctly no place for a woman. But this swing was fortunate in having a capable friendly girl as cook. We shared the tiny bedroom in the cook caboose with dehydrated potatoes, with axes and ice-chisels, with a valuable tool-kit and a hundred other ill-assorted items.

The cook-caboose looks like a large wooden shoe-box set on runners, and is roughly twenty feet by eight and about eight feet high. Set that on a dipping swaying set of runners, and you get plenty of stress and strain on the timbers of the caboose. I'd feel the walls stretching and heaving as I leaned against them at times. This cook-caboose was particularly well-equipped, with a railing



around the top of the stove, and lips on every shelf, cupboards with doors that stayed closed, and furniture that was entirely built-in, even to stove and water-tanks, table and bunks.

Days Became Confused

In that narrow and confined space, we served over 2,000 meals. Lunches were so numerous and at such irregular hours that we lost all count of them. The days became very confused, since we seemed to live each day twice.

We got up twice, once for the early breakfast for two sittings of men at 3.30 in the morning, then later around 8 o'clock for our own breakfast. We were usually too tired and sleepy to enjoy it in the cold grey dawn. Dinner at noon meant 23 men again had to be fed in two sittings, with cook and bull-cook sitting in on a third setting—if they had any appetite left by that time. And frequently we had grown disinterested in food by the time the table was cleared, and dishes and pots and pans washed. Supper, which was like another dinner, came at 8 p.m., when the shift changed after an eight-hour stretch. At each four-hour interval, the men who were on shift would pause for a ten minute break with coffee and sandwiches or doughnuts.

The tractor swing on which I was combination guest-and-bull-cook was in a sense typical of them all, in type and hours of work and in salary. Sleeping and eating accommodations were considered better, so that our swing had earned the name of "The Pullman Swing" or "The Gentlemen Freighters," I learned later. If this was luxury then life must be grim enough on the other tractor swings.

The sun was sinking, golden behind the pointed black spruces, when the tractor swing wheeled out of the freight yard, across the railroad tracks and up onto the bumpy trail which led to God's Lake. One after another the big cats, with their loads, swung into position, pulling away in carefully pre-arranged order, and the caravan of the snows was on its way.

Out along the narrow road the tractors wound at about three miles per hour. It was fascinating to see them taking the curves one after another, the headlights glancing over the snowy evergreens, high-lighting the track of the sleigh runners behind us. As the sun went down, and it became dusk, then dark, ten pairs of lights flickered and wavered as the tractors lurched down into pitch-holes in the road and climbed back out again. There was a sense of the magical and unreal, somehow, as the headlights searched their way around the curves of the road. At times they seemed to be more than just machines.

Excuse For Seasickness

That travelled road between Ilford and God's Lake seems a fine highway to the cat-skinners themselves, but it's rough enough back in the cabooses. To a newcomer it was sufficient excuse for seasickness. I know. And nautical terms came readily to mind. The sleighs and cabooses would pitch and lurch and list as if in the grip of restless cross-current.

We'd climb the sloping deck of the caboose in a desperate effort to keep the coffee pot from being flipped overboard or to rescue plates that were sliding to port or starboard on a freshly set table. We developed a seaman's stance, standing astride, braced against the uncertain jerking and pitching of the tractor swing.

I found myself in profound sympathy with the Indian brakeman of the previous trip. He found himself with glazed eyes and a heaving sensation every time he set foot in the caboose, and wound up by walking behind the cabooses at a lively pace practically 60 miles. I didn't get out and walk—nor lose the excellent dinner I had eaten, but I was glad enough to call it a day by 9.30, with breakfast only a few hours off.

It didn't take long to get accustomed to sleeping on a heaving, tossing pillow, and in spite of the continual noise around us. Snuggled beneath a soft down sleeping robe, we'd hear the noises of the kitchen, the squeak of the runners over the hard snow, the groaning of the caboose as we lurched along. The symphony of sounds made by the heavy iron implements banging against the walls and against each other would die away. We'd soon be oblivious to the clashing of the iron griddle against the frying pans, the higher obligato played by the poker and foasters, the swish and wash of the water in the tanks, the slither of the tea kettle over the top of the stove.

Some days the noise would be too much for us, and we'd escape to the roof of the caboose, and watch the swing as it stretched ahead of us, or the remaining sleighs came behind, for the cook caboose was strategically located in the midst of the swing of sleighs.

We got the sun and the wind up there on top of the caboose, and could even read magazines—if we could concentrate. But it was more exciting to watch the tractors ahead, wonder what was holding up the procession at times or worry over what had happened to the last sleigh in the swing. It was fascinating to watch the sleep-caboose directly behind us. We could tell from the acute angles it achieved, just how our own caboose behaved in the pitch-holes and slush-holes.

Solid Ice Beneath

Out on the lakes, when the slush crept up over our road, a snaky line of yellow slushy water ran in rivulets behind and in front of us. But beneath that lane of slush water was the solid blue ice—except where air holes cropped up here and there on the lake. Rarely was the road a straight line. It looked like a grett snake of dark water, as the trail wove in and out around the dangerous areas.

The route must be chosen with care. The cat-skinners out on the lead machine with the snowplow has a hazardous job. The tractor route makes use of lakes as much as possible, since the best time can be made across the flat frozen surfaces. But the driver must proceed cautiously, must be able to recognize an air-hole long before he approaches it, must know when a slight crack in the snowy surface means a crack in the solid ice five or six feet below. It is no sign of weakness when the driver of the snowplow stands up at the controls of his machine, ready to leap for his life. When a tractor drops through the ice, there's no margin for safety.

Surfaces which are travelled constantly build up into a hard "high road." But on lakes where there are few tractor swings during the winter, it may be necessary to break a new road each trip; sometimes, if it is a poor lake, a new road for each tractor with its sleighs. When the weather is chill, continued driving only strengthens the ice, forming a hard road which makes it all the safer for the tractors coming behind. But when the weather is soft and the surface of the lake is slushy, then each tractor with its load of sleighs merely chews up the slush that much more. The surface of the blue ice sinks under the continued weight, and every on-coming skinner finds more water and slush piled up in front of his machine.

I saw the ice piled up fully five feet in front of the radiator of one of our tractors, slushy water flooding into the cab, and finally into the clutch. The best cat-skinner on the outfit, the driver, could do nothing to extricate his machine, but had to be hauled out of his difficulty by winch and cable. Even attached to two tractors on the shore, the cable couldn't budge him, although he was unhooked from his sleighs. The brakemen got out shovels, toiled in the ice-water up to their waists, draining away the water, shovelling away the slush piled high in front of him. Then the winch got action, pulled the heavy cat loose from its slush-hole, and one by one the sleighs were pulled across to the safety of the shore. But the hole through the slush proved too much of a menace to the swings behind, and a new road had to be plowed through for each machine and its load. On our return trip the weather had tightened up, and the slush had frozen into hard solid hummocks, a further menace to equipment.

Roads Prepared

Long before actual freighting starts, the road must be put into shape. Travelling by dog-team, a crew of men starts out over the route. The ice is tested and measured, a record left on the margin of the lake, with the number of inches of ice and the date marked on it. Right at the margin of the lake, the snow is often piled into drifts, making it impossible for the ice to freeze to a satisfactory thickness.

The men shovel away the snow, to give the chill temperatures of early December a chance to do their work. They may cut trees and lay them across the approach to the lake, a corduroy road that freezes solid and hard when water is poured over the poles. The men report their findings, and the swing-boss knows what he may expect from the coming season. He hopes and prays for continued low temperatures.

After the first crew returns, and freighting is about ready to start, a "breaking" crew goes on the road. They put in bridges where necessary, haul a heavy drag over the portage trails to build up a good foundation, plow the drifts sculpturing the fields of snow over the lakes. They may corduroy steep pitches onto a lake, or even a deep pitch-hole in the road. That is not done for the sake of comfort, I learned, but to save wear and tear on equipment.

The heavy V-poles coupling sleigh or caboose to the tractor are massive timbers of oak, shod with iron, but they snap like matchsticks under great stress. Some outfits prefer lighter weight metal V-poles, but these are unsatisfactory too, since the metal buckles and bends under the strain.

Medical Kit Saw Action

Accidents and near-disasters are commonplace on the tractor swings. The men use the regular railway freighting signals, since voices cannot be heard over the roar of the machines. In the dark, it's difficult to give or receive messages. One night, our brakeman was in between loads coupling the sleighs by dropping the draw-pin into the drawhead. The driver moved a few inches too much in response to his command, and the brakeman was pinned between the two sleighs. In spite of his calls, he could get no answer until the driver, wondering why he hadn't come up, went back to find out what had happened. The brakeman was lucky to escape with life and limb, but he limped for days after that. That same type of accident occurred again the next night.

Our medical kit came into action practically every day of the journey. It might be only a headache that required

an aspirin, or a tooth broken off in one of the lurches of the tractor. We had a case of eczema, irritated by the grease and fuel oil of the sleighs, several attacks of the flu, sore throats and one serious case of blood-poisoning. By the time we had reached home again, our medical supplies were running low. But a tractor swing is no place to be ill. There's little comfort to be had, scant attention, and no hospital hush.

On the lakes between Ilford and God's Lake we saw numerous herds of caribou. In groups of fifty or a hundred, they would stand and stare at the noisy contraptions crawling towards them. Then with fleet bounds they would hurtle over the snow to a safer distance and study us once more. They had migrated northward by the time we returned.

We reached the picturesque community of God's Lake during the night, having crossed the broad lake in the darkness without a sight of the spectacular mirages for which it is famous, and which we saw on the return trip. God's Lake community dropped in one by one to visit and chat. We left a cache of fuel oil for the road back, and we were once more on our way.

Now came the most difficult part of the journey, for before us lay a series of small lakes and rivers, rough portage trails and muskeg. These small lakes are not satisfactory for freighting, since they freeze early, and hold the snow before they get a solid surface of good ice. The snow acts as insulation, preventing the water from freezing to a good depth. Slush ice is the result, and freighting is a nightmare.

We picked up an Indian driver at God's Lake, but the slush on some of the lakes between there and Red Sucker proved too much for his nerve. After several lurches into slush-holes, he declined to drive any farther. "Sick heart," he explained. We understood his feelings.

Work, Eat, Sleep.

The catskinners' life is composed almost entirely of work, eating and sleeping. Sometimes it is a nightmare of anxiety to get off a poor lake onto the safety of the portage, but the swings can move only so fast. At any moment the cat may drop through the ice without a moment's warning. Most of the men prefer to drive open tractors, despite cold weather and blizzards. There's more chance of escape. Our one cab-machine was shunned by the men, in spite of its added comfort. If they had to drive it, it was always with the top folded back for an easy exit.

Crossing these bad lakes, neither the cook nor myself was allowed to ride in the tractors with the drivers. It was too risky. The caboose, in spite of its weight of some ten tons, was considered too buoyant to sink, and remembering the previous trip neither she nor I was anxious to take chances. The previous trip had been grisly.

Crossing one of the lakes in this vicinity, the tractor had plunged through the ice, dragging its sleighs after it. One of our most dependable cat-skinners had been driving, and suddenly there just wasn't any ice below him. He managed to escape from his machine, dodge the sleighs that were pulled down after it, and get to the surface. Fortunately for him, there was someone on hand to help him out of the icy water. The cook caboose was in that group, and even entered the water to about half its length.

Water flooded into the cook caboose, almost to the top of the table, and the cook had to make her way out of it as best she could, soaking wet in sub-zero weather.

Next day the temperature fell to 40 below zero, while the men were working over the lake, trying to raise the sunken cat. In the process, the same driver went through once again. It was a nerve-racking experience that none of them wanted to repeat. On this trip, the men raised the two sleighs, although there was no salvaging the flour and sugar, the baking-powder and tea that had sunk. They call it Sweet Lake now, but not from affection.

Not all drivers emerge from the icy trap of death. The lakes still hold the bodies of cat-skinners who were less fortunate. One driver on another outfit had a lucky break when his cat plunged through the ice. His brakeman, standing on the platform behind, was killed as the cat and load went through the ice and the sleigh behind crashed forward, breaking his spine. The driver managed to shut off the engine—a necessary precaution if the tractor is to be salvaged. He got clear of his machine and rose to the surface, only to strike against the ice. He lay on the surface of the water, breathing the little bit of air under the ice. With great presence of mind, he looked for the open hole where the tractor had gone through. The moonlight striking down through the open hole guided him to safety.

Rough On Driver

We had thought the pitch-holes on the portage trails were rough enough, but they hardly compared with the slush-holes. The tractor breaks through the slushy ice, onto the surface of the blue ice below, then manages to climb back on top of the slushy ice again. It's never any snap to have to pull the cook-caboose, for if the driver goes cautiously to stay in the cook's good graces, especially around mealtime, he loses favor with the shift boss for falling behind and holding up the entire swing.

At such times, the caboose is a perfect place in which to collect burns, bruises, scalds and falls.

Time after time the rough roads meant sudden death to a chocolate cake, or to a pudding set neatly on the sideboard. One day, when the kitchen door was open for coolness, the cook opened the oven door to look at the roast of beef in the oven. A sudden lurch of the swing hurled the roast out onto the floor, and the next jerk sent it out the open door onto the road behind. Even the usual, jaunting along occasionally meant that the griddle slid off the stove, and pancakes would be frying on the black stove top instead. At the sink, I frequently gave myself minor cuts with the paring knife while peeling potatoes or cutting up meat for a stew.

The roughest part of the whole trip was the crossing of a lake less than a mile wide. We spent a full day getting the swing across a distance which would ordinarily be handled in half an hour or so. A very bad slush-hole with an air-hole off to one side was the reason for most of the delay.

Shambles In Galley

A sudden pitch to starboard hurled a pitcher of milk over onto the seat. The caboose righted itself immediately, only to lurch over onto the other side. Things really broke loose then. Jam tins were hurled from their rack, rolling over on the floor and breaking open to mingle in a sodden mass with flour and powdered milk and broken glass and dried beans, and sundry other ingredients. The stove door flew open, and embers rolled out onto the floor, but were immediately extinguished by water that had slopped over on the previous lurch.

Rarely does a caboose roll over, though it does sometimes happen. Sleep cabooses can be rolled more easily, as one of our drivers found. He was extremely unpopular

with the rest of the men after he had flung the men from the top bunk on one side into the opposite bunk. A cook-caboose is a little more weighty, but one night the cook and I were roused from our slumber to get out and walk. A particularly bad slush-hole lay ahead, and there was grave danger that the caboose would roll either way. It would be a difficult feat to get out of a caboose lying on its side, particularly with the stove right at the doorway.

Beyond the post of Red Sucker Lake lay the stretch of lake and portage leading to Island Lake. The slush was bad in these lakes, particularly in one. It seemed necessary to make a road around to a safer part of the lake. Snowplow and caterpillar tractor went into action, slashing down the pole-like trees, filling the air with an odour of bruised evergreens. We stood watching as the shift boss tested the muskeg, and a rank odour arose. He watched the cat as it moved down the road he had selected, and frowned as the muskeg fell and rose as the weight passed over it.

He had just about decided to take the chance anyway, when one of the drivers leaned on the handle of his axe. It sank into the muskeg. There was a look of astonishment on his face, as it shoved on down, right to the head of the axe. That settled it. Slush or no slush, we'd have to take to the lake. The muskeg might have supported the weight of one or two of the tractors, but later loads would inevitably have dropped through the surface. More than one tractor is victim of the muskeg lakes of the north, where the descent is almost as swift as going down through the ice.

Season Well-Advanced

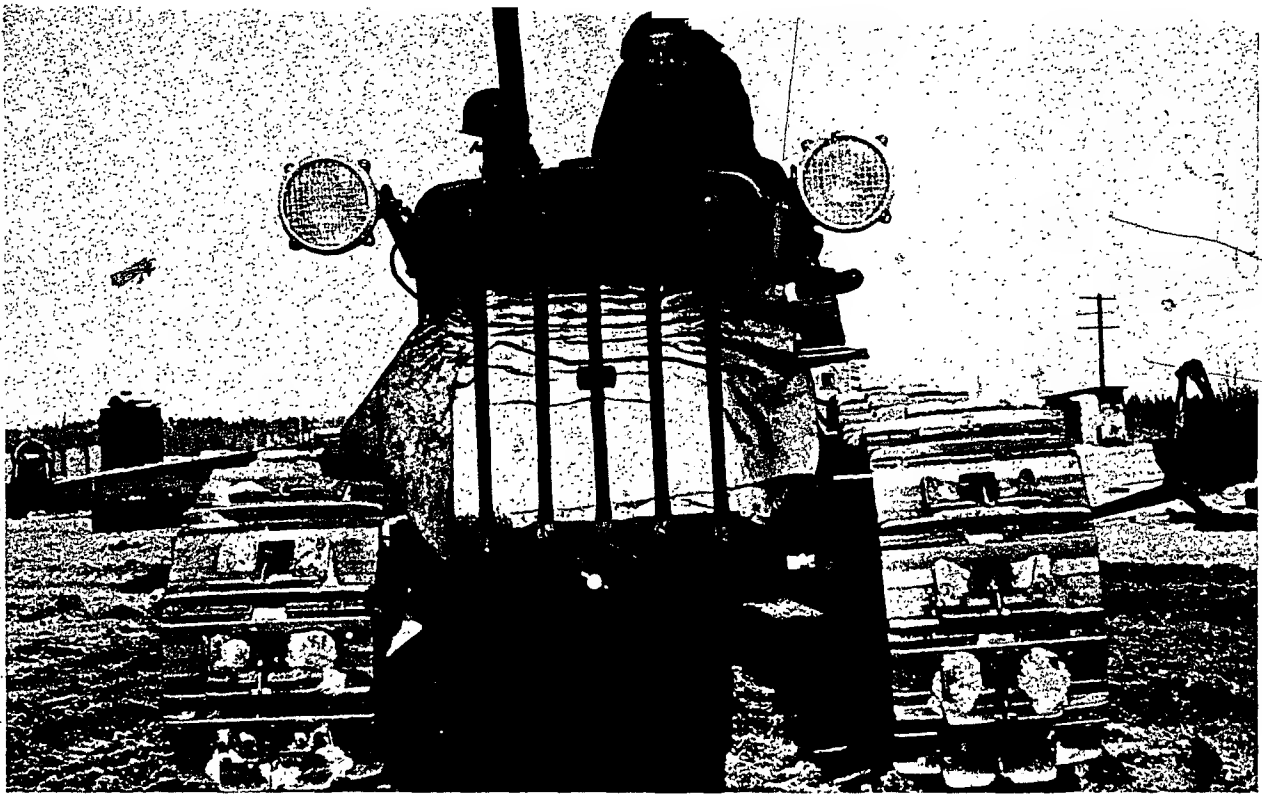
A rough portage led to Island Lake, a most beautiful piece of countryside with its thousands of islands large and small. We sat or lay on top of the caboose, yodelling sea chanties at the top of our lungs. It didn't matter that we were often off key—no one could hear us over the noise of the tractors, anyway.

The freighting season was already well-advanced, for spring was just around the corner. You could tell by the wine-red of the osiers, the swelling buds of the birches, and the yellow in the tamaracks. We could see how the Chinook wind was cutting away at the snowdrifts, leaving hollows around the bole of every tree. The men were in good spirits, and at a halt at the end of the portage a snowball scrimmage was but natural with the soft snow perfect for packing.

Just a little off to our right, as we lurched down the lake toward the abandoned Island Lake mine, was the grave of a tractor. Under 400 feet of water lies \$35,000 worth of gold concentrates still piled on its sleighs, still attached to the gas-burning Lynn tractor. Cat and sleighs plummeted through the ice, and there they still lie. The driver escaped with his life—he's in the railroading profession now.

We also saw a tractor which had gone through the ice, complete with winch and cable and snowplow. It was hanging suspended between the ice of the surface and the bottom by heavy cables moored to deadheads frozen into the ice. An elaborate scheme had been concocted for raising it. They'd get it up alright, too.

Fast as they could work, the men unloaded their wares at the Hudson's Bay Company post at Island Lake, for the missions and the Department of Indian Affairs. We found time for social doings. Among our visitors were two Oblate missionaries, rather strange with parkas tied over their cassocks, moccasins beneath them, and riding with their skirts flapping in the wind or running behind their dog-sleds.



As fast as the freight was unloaded, the sleighs were double-decked to reduce the drag. One of the machines broke down, and also had to be loaded. A pay-load of fish was picked up, and off we went again, homeward bound this time.

Met Other Outfits

On the home trail we met the other freighting outfits at various points along the road. For all the rivalry between the different outfits, courtesy of the road prevails. If two swings meet on a portage trail, the more lightly loaded gives way to the more heavily loaded. Often the tractors are uncoupled to break a road for the other swing, or to help get all the loads across.

News of the road is exchanged, discussion of various parts of the trail. "Watch for the cracks in God's Lake," we were warned. Often a signal of crossed evergreen trees was set up for warning not to use a road that had proved difficult.

Other courtesies are displayed too. "Short of fuel? Sure, I can let you have five barrels." "Good, and you can pick up five from my cache back along the road."

There's co-operation between the swings, too. The amount of new road necessary is computed among the bosses, and some courtesy payment is made if one swing has borne the brunt of making new roads.

Frequently we'd see a stick thrust into the snow along the tractor trail, a cleft cut into it with an axe to hold messages for someone who is to follow. One of them on the Bearskin route read, "Welcome to Sunny Ontario." Evidently a prankster from the neighbouring province had passed that way.

There's not much time for humor on the tractor swings, but there was one social occasion, when freight unloading had to wait for daylight. Someone got news of a "squaw hop" being held in one of the Indian cabins. We trudged out across a trail which we could not see, only feel with our feet as we went along to one of these dances. The trail was marked out by the odd bit of evergreen branch thrust into the snow, scant guidance in a night of clouds and snow that was nearly rain. After about a mile we

reached a little shanty of poles plastered over with mud, and down we went through a tiny doorway and into the lamp-lit cabin.

"Gents to the right, ladies to the left." The ladies ranged from a few months old to an age of deep wrinkles, and few were of the glamor age. Several of the Indians of our outfit were there before us, and they were indeed the dashing strangers, we discovered. The councillor welcomed us, and we ranged ourselves on the floor with the rest.

To the music of a guitar and violin, impassive Indians stamped out the beat, and finally the councillor called for partners. Our partners were the boys from the swing, our drivers, and they were as light-footed as you could wish. They used a sort of double-shuffle in the dance, and the pace was fast and furious. Without a sign of emotion of any kind, the stolid Indian lads kept on stamping, while the white people got entangled in the intricacies of the square dance, and were set right by their Indian partners. We were thoroughly steamed up in the close atmosphere at the end of one dance, but we stayed to watch another. Some of the callers could not speak a word of English apart from square dance calls. We didn't stay for refreshments, though a huge pot of beans on the stove gave a hint of what was to come.

But such frivolities have scant place in the life of the tractor swing. There was work waiting, and back we went across the snowy lake, through the portage trail under tall pines to the caboose. The outfit looked like a gypsy encampment and would vanish as quickly. Cartons and bags of freight were piled up in front of the trading post; with the headlights of the tractors blazing full upon them. It was a precautionary measure—something to lighten the burden of the night watchman.

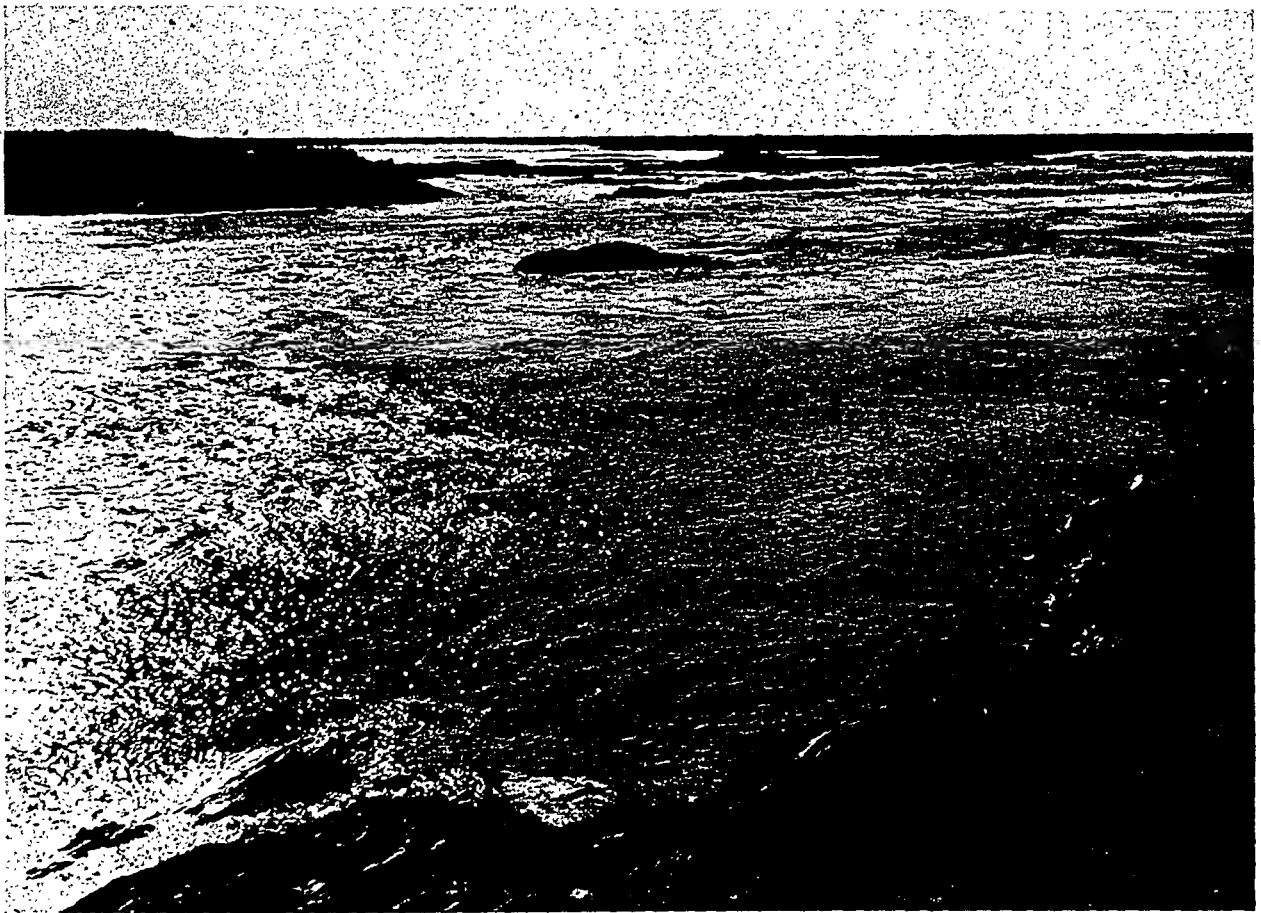
Once the freight is unloaded there is little delay on the return trip back to steel. Wind-up of the season means a party, and a forgetting of all irritations of the road. "This is the last time I'm going to freight," they all declare.

Some of them have been saying it for sixteen years.

—Lyn Harrington

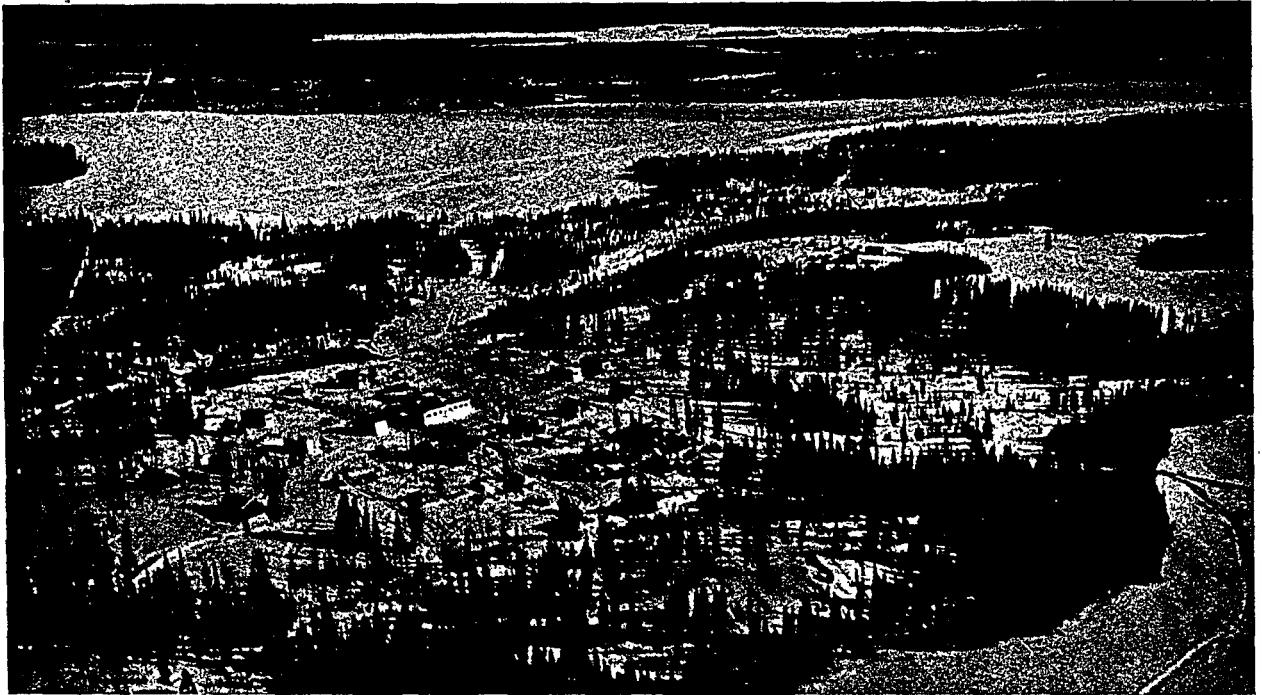


*One of the Myriad
Lakes of the North
... Wabowden*



*Mighty Waters Roll
Toward Hudson Bay
... Kettle Rapids*





Here, under the rocks, lies a fortune in nickel.

Nickel Strike

ONE of the great stories of the north centres around a lake that didn't even have a name, not so long ago. Now it has a name—Lynn Lake—and a growing reputation as a major nickel discovery.

The Lynn Lake country had been well known for a long time; prospectors had been going over it since 1927 without so much as a hint of valuable ore in the rocks. Then in 1941 Austin McVeigh, a veteran prospector, came upon an outcropping of nickel and copper sulphides north of the lake. But that was a war year. Northern air services weren't up to much, and the company decided to keep the find a secret for fear some better equipped outfit might move in. They waited for three years, then they went to work and the lid came off. Scouts from other mining companies soon picked up the scent of something big, and the mad scramble for location claims began. By the spring of 1947 an area stretching from the Saskatchewan border 60 miles east, and in places 50 miles wide, was completely staked.

Ads appeared in eastern Canadian papers offering the inside dope on Lynn Lake minerals for \$2. In 1946 Sherritt-Gordon Mines, who maintained leadership in the area, had completed 70,000 feet of diamond drilling, and were planning much more. Top mining engineers figured it would be no trick at all to prove up 20,000,000 tons of ore around Lynn Lake, and 5,000,000 tons had already been outlined by the diamond drills. Cat swings were

roaring in and out on regular daily schedules, bearing more equipment, more supplies, more men. The company had a sawmill set up not far away to supply the vast quantities of lumber that would be needed for building.

A new city is predicted in the far north. Men are talking of \$25,000,000 smelters and power projects, on the Churchill River and a new railway 150 miles through the muskeg. Gold finds in the same area are just waiting for transportation and power for further probing.

Comparison of the new area's prospects with developments at Sudbury, Ontario, is unavoidable now. The new ore, mining men say, is less complex than that mined at Sudbury, and as rich, if not richer. It presents no great metallurgical problems. But much more experimentation is needed before the full possibilities are known, and research equipment is constantly being moved in. A five-compartment shaft is to be sunk to the 1,000 foot level.

New companies by the score are being formed to join with names like International Nickel, International Mining, Noranda and Conwest in the mad search for riches under the rocks. Wherever a little knot of prospectors is seen, it is a safe bet that a new company is in the making.

A few years and many more millions of dollars will go before there is a mining town at Lynn Lake, but only the most pessimistic can doubt that there will be one, and that it will be big. □



Solid, modern houses are springing up at Snow Lake.

Model Mining Town

THE sprawling mining boom town is a thing of the past in Manitoba, and 86 air miles north of The Pas may be found concrete evidence that new mineheads of the future will be surrounded by well-planned, well-built communities. The newest town of the north is still officially named Township 68; but the people up there call it Snow Lake, and from the first it was planned to allow for present needs and future growth.

There is gold under the townsite of Snow Lake—enough gold to justify planning of a town for 1,500 families. A four room school, a seven bed hospital and a \$75,000 community centre are being built there, and the Hudson's Bay Company has opened the first store. Soon to move in are a branch of the Royal Bank of Canada and a movie theatre. The cost of public buildings and developments is being borne by the Howe Sound Exploration Company, operator of the gold mine, which receives in return a number of lots at nominal prices and local tax concessions for a number of years.

The company has shown keen interest in the new town, and has agreed to maintain streets, water, sewage and electric systems, fire fighting equipment and other public services. Apart from this it will contribute \$6,000 yearly to the cost of local government.

The new townsite is the first to be developed in the province under a new section of the Local Government Districts Act, passed by the Manitoba legislature in 1945.

The government has appointed an administrator, who will have the powers of a municipal council during the first years of the town's growth. Land in the area, originally Crown property, will be sold through him.

In laying out the townsite, the company first carried out a detailed topographical survey of the area around the mine, and prepared a contour map. A model townsite was laid out on paper, taking full advantage of existing surface features, and this was later adapted slightly on the spot. The site was subdivided by the province and the lots sold to the administrator, at base land values. First chance at lots goes, of course, to employees of the company, and to firms and persons who will provide necessary services to the community.

Services supplied by the Howe Sound Exploration Company must be carried out to the satisfaction of the administrator, and cannot be terminated without a year's notice, according to the agreement reached, which runs to December 31, 1951, and is renewable yearly after that. Provision has been made for division of costs, should other companies enter the townsite and new mining developments open up in the area.

The town is served by a road which connects with the Hudson Bay Railway at Mile 82, Wekusko. Begun in 1946 and now nearing completion, the road will be paid for jointly by the Dominion and Manitoba governments, and the company. □



*Summer Vacation for
A Winter Worker
... Husky at Churchill*



*On the Lookout
For White Whales*

Churchill



Hunting White Whales on Hudson Bay

MOBY DICK has become a legend. But at the end of steel in northern Manitoba, in Churchill harbor, white whales still dive and play in the waters off Manitoba's seacoast. Hunting them is a thrill known only to sportsmen who holiday in the Keystone province.

Churchill is Canada's newest national port, but it is also one of the oldest. For to this cold land of Hudson Bay came men like Henry Hudson and Thomas Button 337 years ago. The British flag was flying here in 1612, and Manitobans point out that it has been flying longer over this province than any other. Today, its harbor, at the entrance of the Churchill River on the west side of Hudson Bay, has fully modern port facilities including a grain elevator with a 2,500,000 bushel capacity.

Churchill was the springboard for the Canadian Army's 3,100 mile Exercise Muskox, and is now headquarters for Canadian and American army Arctic equipment tests and experiments.

But white whale hunting is still one of Churchill's most unusual attractions. To the sportsman, the whale hunt offers the ultimate in thrills. To the northern native a successful whaling season means food for his husky dogs all through the winter.

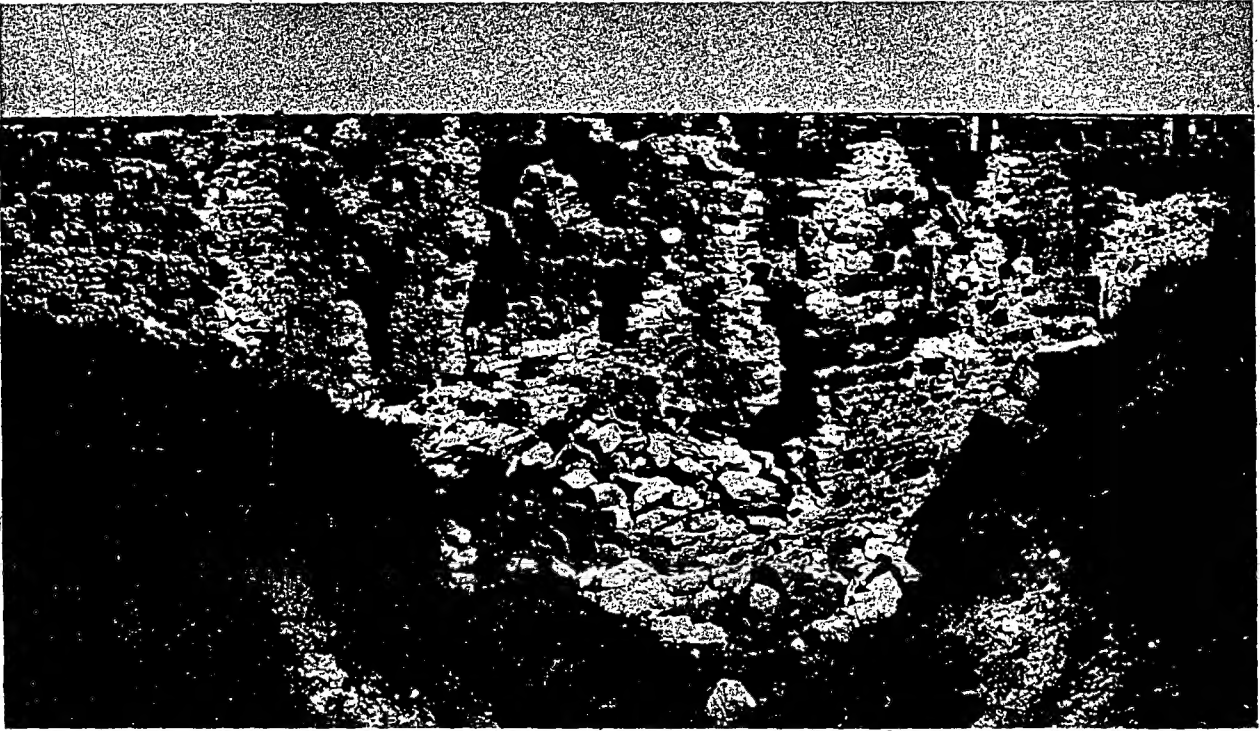
Most naturalists agree that the whales come into Churchill harbor to feed on small fish to be found there. They chase their quarry in, but once close to shore the pursuer becomes the pursued, and the hunters, in canoes powered by outboard motors, try to drive the whales into shallow water.

The canoes, with the usual four passengers, can hit a speed of about 16 miles an hour—no match for the whale's 25 mile-an-hour clip. The helmsman has to outguess the whale, and above all prevent him from breaking for the open sea. When the intended victim tires, as he does fairly quickly if kept on the run, the hunter with his harpoon moves in for the battle. Whales sometimes attack the canoe with titanic lunges of their 12-foot, 1,500 pound bodies, and an upset boat means no pleasant swim, with the waters of the bay at about 34 degrees.

Driving home of the harpoon—a pole with detachable barbed iron head—is a close range matter and the weapon is seldom thrown. Many hunters are content to let their native guides do the harpooning. A buoy attached to the harpoon line marks the course of the quarry as it scampers across the water, and the boat follows as best it can, to bring the whale within deadly range of the hunter's high-powered rifle. Once killed, the whale is dragged ashore and cut up for dog food, leather and blubber for oil.

In appearance the white whale is not unlike what you might expect a white pig to look like. Usually it is greater in girth than in length, with a small head and tiny eyes which seem out of proportion to the large body. The white whale is definitely an animal, not a fish. The skeleton formation is similar to that of cattle, and the females nurse their young. Calf whales are a brownish grey color, changing to white toward maturity. □





FORT PRINCE OF WALES, begun by the British in 1733 to protect their fur trading interests and destroyed by the French in 1782 to protect theirs, rivals the better known fortresses of Quebec and Louisburg as an historic monument. It stands today in the same state as it was left by French artillery which tried for days to demolish the 42-foot thick walls. The ruins, near Churchill, on Hudson Bay, make a superb subject for amateur photographers on a northern visit.



THE GUNS STILL POINT out over Hudson Bay, although they never fired a shot in the fortress' defense. History records that Samuel Hearne, then governor and a better explorer than soldier, surrendered the fort to the French without a battle and was taken to France as a prisoner. In 1783 England and France made peace and Hearne went back to take charge at Churchill, but he settled five miles up the Churchill River and never tried to rebuild the fort.

